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EXPOSITION

OF THE

SERMON ON THE MOUNT,

DRAWN FROM THE

WRITINGS OF ST. AUGUSTINE,

WITH OBSERVATIONS,

AND AN INTRODUCTORY ESSAY ON HIS MERITS AS AN  
INTERPRETER OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

BY

RICHARD CHENEVIX TRENCH, B.D.

VICAR OF ITCHENSTOKE, HANTS;

AND EXAMINING CHAPLAIN TO THE LORD BISHOP OF OXFORD.

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## P R E F A C E.

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THIS volume is not, as a glance at any page will show, a translation of St. Augustine's *Commentary on the Sermon on the Mount*,\* but an attempt to draw from the circle of his writings, (that one of course included,) what of most important he has contributed for the elucidation, or for the turning to practical uses, of this portion of Holy Scripture.

Yet I am conscious, from the very plan upon which the book is written, that it may be open to a charge, at least from an unfriendly critic, of something like presumption. It may be said that there is in it a continual passing of judgment,—an allowing and a disallowing,—a selecting and a putting aside,—an approving and condemning; and this in regard of one whom the Church has ever and justly recognized among the very chiefest

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\* In the Benedictine Edition, tom. iii. pars 2<sup>a</sup>, pp. 162—236.

of her teachers. A friend, to whom the manuscript, when nearly prepared for press, was shown,—and whose counsel and judgment that I am able at all times to profit by, is one of the chief happinesses of my life,—has warned me that it will hardly escape a charge of the kind. Yet I have not therefore been persuaded to alter my scheme, as indeed I could not have altered it, without renouncing the work altogether. For the plan which is now finding favour among us, of presenting in the mass, unsifted and untried, the old expositions of Scripture, often placing side by side explanations which, in their minor details at least, exclude one another, and this with no attempt to judge or discriminate between them,—no endeavour to separate the accident of one age, the superfluous, it may be the injurious, excrescence from the eternal truth, which is of all and for all ages,—seems to me profitable for little, and not likely to lead us into any deeper, or clearer and more intelligent knowledge of Scripture. Moreover, when we confine ourselves merely to giving back the old, and this with well nigh a suspension of all judgment about it, what is this but saying, that the productive powers of the Church have ceased; that her power of educing from God's Word, by that Spirit which is ever with her, the truth in those

forms in which it will best meet our present needs, exists no longer; that henceforth the Scripture shall be for us a cistern, clear it may be, and full, but no longer a spring of water springing up as freshly and newly for our lips, as for the lips of any generation which has gone before:—and as her productive, so also that her discriminative power is gone; she may no longer discern that which is akin to, and will assimilate with, her true life, and claim that and that only for her own?

Neither seems there any genuine humility in forgoing or denying our advantages;—they may be slight ones compared with those which other ages enjoyed for entering into the meaning of God's Word; but, if slight, therefore to be husbanded the more. And, not to speak of the accumulation of merely critical and external helps, some such we plainly have. To deny this were to deny to the Church,—to her who, according to her truest idea, is ever teacher and ever taught,—that she has been learning any thing in the eighteen hundred years of her troubled warfare with the evil within her and the evil without. Yet some things surely she has found out: some practices which promised well, which she anticipated would further piety, her own life and history have taught her do inevitably sooner or later run to seed, and

hinder that holiness which they were meant to set forward; that, tolerably safe in the hands of the earnest few, they are most unsafe when they descend, as by inevitable progress they must descend, to the more careless many. Some language which for a while she held, or did not at least absolutely exclude, she has now discovered not to be the most adequate expression of the doctrines which she has always held, and therefore she will use no longer, and will disclaim, though she find it used by the most honoured of her teachers, even as she is sure that they would themselves disclaim it now. Before the false teaching of Eutyches had compelled her clearly to represent to herself the relation of the two natures in Christ, it impeached no man's orthodoxy, though he spoke of our blessed Lord as God *mingled with* man; but who, that meant right, would have used this language after? Before the order of our justification had been brought out with that distinctness, in which a doctrine only can be brought out through an earnest contending for it against some that would obscure or deny it, men might put the first last, and speak of sins "expiated with alms," or "washed out with tears." In such language we recognize a loss, as in all lack of distinctness there is such, but not a denial upon their parts who used

this language *then*, that “we are justified by faith only.” It were another thing to seek to revive and return to that language now.

The consciousness, moreover, that we, too, in our age, have our errors,—most of them, like some inner vest, worn so close, as to be invisible even to ourselves,—that we, too, have our mistaken tendencies, our superstitions, our faulty statements of the truth, which we are handing down to the Church of a later age, for it slowly to discern, painfully to get rid of,—this, while it may well hinder that boastful self-exalting spirit, which is more fatal than any thing beside to a profiting by the past, yet must not hinder from a respectful using, even as regards our great forefathers in the faith themselves, whatsoever since their time the Church has won. Such a freedom they used with one another, such they demanded should be used in regard of themselves; and such we must use in regard of them, if we would obtain from their writings the large blessing which they are capable of yielding; if these are to help to lead us into liberty, and not into bondage; if they are to be indeed our riches, and not, under that name, truly our poverty.

For myself, in regard of this little volume, which, however slight, I would not willingly leave

exposed to this charge of presumption, I can only say that it was begun in a thankful admiration, which has gone on ever increasing and deepening, for the infinite spiritual and intellectual riches which are contained in the writings of St. Augustine. All added acquaintance with these more and more has explained to me the mighty influence, the wondrous spell which he has exerted over so many among the strongest spirits of all ages,—the great purposes which God in his providence has made him to fulfil for his Church.

For first, if one accurately regards the earlier theology of the Christian East, one cannot fail to be struck with this, that it was prevailingly a metaphysic of the divine Being, a contemplation of the divine attributes and perfections. It was with these, most needful indeed to be fixed and to be first fixed, that the Church was mainly occupied for more than the first three centuries of her existence. But in Augustine the theology of the West, and of the modern world,—the theology which relates not merely to God, but to the God of men,—first came out into its full importance. St. Paul had now his rights no less than St. John. Theology was no longer the science of God merely or mainly as He is in himself, but in his relation to us. It is not any more the objective know-



ledge of God which is all, but with this the subjective knowledge of God's image in man, that image defaced, and that image restored; it is no longer predominantly a God revealing, but also a God communicating, himself;—not Christ the God-man only, but Christ the Redeemer as well. And now, too, man first appears in his true worth and dignity: that which shows him to be nothing, shows him also to be much; for in him all these counsels of grace centre; round him these purposes of eternity revolve; he appears as the meeting-place of two worlds; the personal significance of every man comes out, and the free modern western world begins,—the germs of it at least are securely laid. And believing this, one cannot sufficiently admire the manner in which St. Augustine's appearance was timed; for it was the last moment, at which living he could have shared the fulness of the culture of the ancient world; for thenceforward that whole world was daily becoming more incoherent, and ever falling more rapidly into ruins. He in fact himself survived it in Italy: it hardly survived him a few months in Africa. At the same time he thus lived the nearest to, and in the most favourable position for influencing, that new world, in forming of which he was so greatly to aid.

How much he did form it, how he ruled the middle ages, either in his own name, or by moulding the men who in their turn ruled their generation, is known to every student of Church History. Nor is it hard to understand how this should have been: for the two great tendencies of those ages, the mystic and scholastic, are both lying, in much more than their first elements, side by side in his writings.\* There is in them, on the one hand, a rare dialectic skill, with the keenest delight in its exercise, and in all speculative inquiry; a desire ever, where it was possible, to justify to the reason what had first been received by faith, with a confidence that what was humbly received by this would afterwards commend itself to that. Yet with all this there is borne by him a continual witness against the excesses of the dialectic and speculative tendencies: he evermore summons to a more excellent way of knowing, one not mediate, but intuitive and immediate, a knowing which is

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\* In remarkable confirmation of this view of him, as one who united and anticipated all that was best and noblest in these two tendencies, is the fact that Hugo de S. Victore, on whom Liebner has written a work, (*Hugo von St. Victor*, Leipzig, 1832,) as the first in whom the scholasticism and mysticism of the middle ages, hitherto hostile and intolerant of one another, were reconciled and harmoniously atoned, should have borne the title from his contemporaries of *alter Augustinus, lingua Augustini*.

first loving; he evermore would have us remember that we shall sooner enter into the deepest mysteries of the faith by praying than disputing.

Nor did his dominion end with the middle ages. On the contrary, that work for which we owe him the greatest thanks was yet to be accomplished. The Reformers felt and found that he more than any other was their Doctor. The issue of their later controversy in the matter of justification lay in fact wrapped up in the issue of his controversy with the Pelagians. This last being won, that was implicitly won also, for it was only the same question at a later stage of its development, the necessary carrying out of the truths which he then asserted. The contest concerning the extent of the corruption of human nature did most truly involve the question concerning the nature of the remedies which would be equal to meet that corruption, the conditions under which it was possible that the sick man could recover his health; whether aught, in short, could be the remedy, except that *faith* which should place him in immediate relation with Christ, and thus be the channel whereby the uninterrupted streams of an healing life should flow into his soul. And in the Romish Church itself, whensoever any of her children, a Baius or Jansenius, without desiring absolutely to

forsake her communion, have yet longed to make these doctrines of grace more or less their own, they have ever sheltered themselves under the authority of Augustine; they have ever pleaded that they were but holding what he had held long before.

When we feel thus concerning him,—when we have this thankful recognition of the greatness of his work, which has extended through so many ages, so much of which we are inheriting now, which has indelibly stamped itself on the very form of our Catechism and our Articles,—there can be little reason why we should shrink from expressing, with exactly the confidence which we feel in the matter, any occasional dissent from the details of his Scriptural interpretation: more especially when in this matter also we know, that after every drawback which the truth may require is made, our obligations to him, whether as regards scientific or popular exposition, the laws of interpretation, or the practical application of those laws, are probably greater than to any single Interpreter of God's Word.

But because we owe to St. Augustine a debt of gratitude so large, shall we also count ourselves bound to say that, in his practical application of his principles, he is always true to his own laws?

or that he had himself the same external helps at command as an Origen or a Jerome? or that his Latin version or his Septuagint has not sometimes led him astray? or that his exposition is not occasionally warped by, and submitted to the influence of, his dogmatic system? or that his allegories and mystical numbers are worthy in each case to stand unquestioned, and may now be profitably reproduced to edify us? To demand this were to demand for him that which he would not have demanded for himself; that which can be refused without abating one jot of true and genuine reverence and honour, the more valuable because rendered not blindly, but with discrimination and with knowledge.

I will add a few words more upon the plan on which this book has been composed. It resembles, to compare a very small matter with a great, that of the *Augustinus* of Jansenius, which is probably familiar to many. His purpose, as is well known, in his celebrated work, was to bring all which Augustine had written in regard to that great Pelagian controversy, under review at once, to set it in order, and to present it thus ordered and arranged, with the quotation of the most material passages, before the eyes of his reader. He implied not, in so doing, that Augustine's own works wanted

the highest order and method ; or that they were only as a rough quarry, from which others should dig and build. But the very circumstances of their production necessarily caused that which bears on any single matter to be scattered up and down in divers treatises, and that matter only to be fully handled when these separated portions are united and brought together. For a great part of his polemical works will only be contemplated from a right point of view, when we regard them as occasional tracts, each drawn from him by the urgent necessities of the Church at the moment, in answer to the solicitation of friends, or the provocation of enemies;—and that, during a time when the controversy was ever shifting its aspect, and each party was more and more feeling its grounds, completing and harmonizing its system, discovering the ultimate results to which it would lead. This is the especial value of his writings in more than one great conflict wherein he is the standard-bearer of the Church, that they are not one great work, reviewing calmly and in part with a literary interest a finished controversy, not the history of a battle which the Church has fought and won, but themselves, so to speak, acts and exploits, often the decisive ones, in that battle. Yet while this is their value, it also leaves room for such a work as that



with which the Bishop of Ypres so disturbed from his grave the Vatican, and all who wished to reconcile a professed veneration for the great Doctor of the West, with a real departure from the truths which he lived to maintain ;—one of the hardest tasks which the Church of Rome has found imposed upon her ; one which greatly perplexed her at Trent, which put her to her shiftiest world-wisdom then as since, and the difficulties of which were by this book infinitely increased.

Now there is room for a conspectus of the same kind in regard to those portions of Scripture which he has illustrated in his writings. For there too we seldom find in one place all that he has to say upon one matter : in them too he often repeats himself, the practical needs of those for whom he wrote or spake, making it often needful that he should go over the same ground again and again ; though indeed his resources are such that it is generally with variations ; it rarely happens but that some further touch is added. In them too his opinions often underwent a progress and a change. For example, Rom. vii. 7—25 he differently explained in his earlier and in his later years. Thus, again, his *Commentary* especially dedicated to the Sermon on the Mount, which was written indeed while he was yet a presbyter, contains comparatively little of

what he has contributed for the elucidation of that portion of Scripture. For example, he dismisses the words, "For they shall see God," in two or three lines, while yet this vision of God in other places occupied him greatly: he has dedicated a letter, so long that it is often numbered among his treatises, to this single subject. The relation, again, of the new legislation of Christ to the law of Moses, the right apprehension of which can alone give us a key to this discourse, is very slightly touched on, as compared with the large handling which it finds in his writings directed against the Manichæans. And other examples of the kind might easily be multiplied. It is in his *Sermons*, in his *Letters*, in his *Exposition of the Psalms*, in his controversial Tracts, that what he has most precious as bearing on this discourse is to be found,—from these it must be gathered together. It has been my aim to concentrate these scattered rays.

I cannot indeed hope that I have brought to bear all or nearly all in his writings which helps the interpretation of these chapters, or is characteristic of him as their interpreter, nor that I have made the happiest use of the materials which I had at command. Yet I can truly say that I have been continually embarrassed, not by the scantness, but



by the abundance of my materials; perplexed how to work them up,—how, without exceeding the limits which I had set myself, not to leave out much of a deep interest. Often I have only given a single sentence, oftentimes only a reference, when I would willingly have given a page: so that although the book is constructed throughout on the supposition that the reader will not have an Augustine at hand, or will not care to afford time for the following up the references, yet is it also arranged to yield much additional information to any who should be willing to undertake this labour.

Here too another observation may be necessary. It is well known that the Benedictine Editors of Augustine on very slight evidence, or often indeed on no evidence at all save their own inward conviction, have dismissed numerous sermons much too hastily, as since has been generally considered, from the body of his works. Now there should be something to justify this dismissal, more than a general observation, with which they are often satisfied, that such or such a sermon is quite in the manner of Cæsarius, or some one else.\* There should be phrases of a more debased Latin, allusion

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\* Cæsarii stylum et mentem refert.

to Church rites and customs which grew not into use till a later period, inaccuracies in dogmatic statements, thoughts altogether unworthy of a great teacher. Such in many of these sermons there are, entirely justifying what they have done ; but in others these marks are altogether wanting : and without the presence of any such they relegate, apparently at their caprice, a sermon to the Appendix. I have a few times quoted from these sermons, yet always giving notice of the quarter from whence the quotations are drawn, that the reader may know that they are from writings which the Benedictine Editors have adjudged as spurious. Of course those I have quoted I have believed genuine. On the other hand, I have refrained from making any use of the volume of sermons lately published as Augustine's at Paris,\* and this because in it there is a running into the opposite extreme. Doubtless several genuine discourses of his, valuable additions to those which we already possessed, are here published for the first time ; but very much also, altogether unworthy of him, is boldly put forth under his name. There is not apparently much in these discourses which would

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\* *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Sermones inediti, curá et studio D. A. B. CAILLAU. Parisiis. 1842.*

directly bear upon the subject which I had in hand, and till a decision is arrived at about them, carrying with it more weight than any which this very uncritical edition can lend, I have thought it better to leave them altogether untouched.

Perhaps a still more difficult task than to know where to stay one's hand in actual quotation, was to leave unnoticed the innumerable interesting subjects which the Sermon on the Mount of itself suggests, to refuse to follow down the avenues, which, as one advances, present themselves ever to the right hand and to the left. Yet this self-denial I have used, wherever the subject was not fairly in one way or another suggested by something which Augustine has said. There is indeed a disadvantage in this, a loss like his who undertakes to paint a picture with a single colour, and whose work is in danger of lacking liveliness and variety, yet one amply counterbalanced by the advantage of continuing true to the scheme of one's book; and that scheme in the present instance was not to bring together all that I could for the elucidation of this all-important discourse, but rather whatever Augustine had contributed for that elucidation, thus seeking to give the reader an idea of him as a practical interpreter of Scripture, which idea would

only have been disturbed by the introduction of alien matter.\*

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\* The ample treasures of St. Augustine's writings have more than once suggested books not unlike this in plan. Thus there is a *Catena* on the Epistles of St. Paul drawn altogether from his works, which is commonly ascribed to Bede as its author; Baronius doubts whether correctly, but apparently on no sufficient grounds. There is a *Commentary on St. Luke*, collected by Jacobus a Logenhagen, Antwerp., 1574; also, from an anonymous author, *Augustinus in Vetus et Novum Testamentum*, Basileæ, 1542. This seemed to me carelessly and negligently done: the obvious passages which one might lay hands on at once are given, but little care is used in collecting what is scattered up and down, and it abounds with large and needless gaps. The books of moral and theological *Loci Communes* which have been formed exclusively from his writings, have a remoter resemblance. Of such there are several, as *D. Aurelii Augustini Millelogium Veritatis*, a F. Bartholomæo de Urbino, Lugdunum, 1555, alphabetically arranged under several heads. Another commonplace book of his most notable sayings, by Johannes Piscatorius Lithopolitanus, Augustæ Vindelicorum, 1537, has not an alphabetical but a dogmatic arrangement. And of more importance than either of these, Reiser, *S. Augustinus Veritatis Evangelico-Catholicæ Testis et Confessor*, Francof., 1678, in which the chief passages of his writings are brought together, in which he witnesses for the Reformed as against the Romish theology.

PREFACE  
TO  
THE SECOND EDITION.

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THE most important matter in which this second edition differs from the first is in the addition of the preliminary Essay, which, with the exception of two or three paragraphs, is altogether new.

ITCHENSTOKE, *March* 26, 1851.



## CHAPTER I.

IT is not my intention to offer in this present essay any estimate of the worth of St. Augustine's theology, regarded as a whole, but so far as possible to confine myself to the subject indicated by its title, and to consider him in a single light, that is, as an interpreter of Holy Scripture. An essay undertaking this, if it were not closely watched in its growth, might easily, and almost unawares, pass into that, and thus become quite another thing from that which it was intended to be: yet it does not appear to me that an attempt to trace his leading characteristics as an expositor, to estimate his accomplishments, moral and mental, for being a successful one, to set forth the rules and principles of exposition which he either expressly laid down or habitually acted on, and to give a few specimens of his actual manner of interpretation, (which is all I propose to myself here,) need involve the logical necessity of going on to consider his whole scheme of theology. Between so great and arduous a work as that, and the comparatively humbler, and certainly more limited task which I have undertaken here, a line of distinction may very justly be drawn, and if due watchfulness is exercised, may without any great difficulty be observed.

In considering the merits of a theologian and interpreter of God's Holy Word, we naturally inquire first, what were his moral qualifications for the work which he undertook; for if goodness be so essential even to the orator, that one of old defined him as *Vir bonus, dicendi peritus*, and few I think will quarrel with that *bonus*, or count it superfluous in the definition, how much more essentially must it belong, and in its highest form of love towards God and to all which truly witnesses of God, to the great theologian. That old maxim, *Pectus facit theologum*, will always continue true, and, other things being equal or nearly equal, he will best explain Scripture, who most loves Scripture. We may therefore very fairly open this subject by gathering from Augustine's own lips a few testimonies of the love with which *he* regarded it, and the labour which he counted well bestowed upon its study: for herein lay the pledge and promise that it should yield up to him the hid treasures which it contained. And certainly no one came to the study of Scripture with a more entire confidence that in it were laid up all treasures of wisdom and knowledge, that in the investigation of it truer joys were to be found than anywhere besides.\* Perhaps in no Christian writer of any age do we meet more, or more varied, expressions of a rapturous delight in the Word of God; no one laid himself down in its green pastures with a deeper and a fuller joy; no one more entirely felt

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. xxxviii. 1.*



that he might evermore draw water from these "wells of salvation" without fear of drawing them dry.\*

Availing himself here of his own experience, he loved to compare the Scriptures of truth not merely with the Manichæan falsehoods and figments, the "husks," with which he had once sought to fill himself, but even with the noblest and loftiest productions of the uninspired intellect of man. Thus in many places, and especially in an eloquent and affecting passage in his *Confessions*, he compares Scripture with the books which he had studied in the time of his addiction to the philosophy of Plato, and tells us what he finds in it, which he did not find in them.† And as he had proved in his own case that love, and love only, had "the key of knowledge," so he con-

\* *Ep.* 137. c. 1: Tanta est enim Christianarum profunditas litterarum, ut in eis quotidie proficerem, si eas solas ab ineunte pueritiâ usque ad decrepitam senectutem maximo otio, summo studio, meliore ingenio conarer addiscere: non quod ad ea quæ necessaria sunt saluti, tantâ in eis perveniatur difficultate: sed cum quisque ibi fidem tenuerit, sine quâ pie recteque non vivitur, tam multa, tamque multiplicibus mysteriorum umbraculis opacata, intelligenda proficientibus restant, tantaque non solum in verbis quibus ista dicta sunt, verum etiam in rebus quæ intelligendæ sunt, latet altitudo sapientiæ, ut annosissimis, acutissimis, flagrantissimis cupiditate discendi hoc contingat, quod eadem Scriptura quodam loco habet, Cum consummaverit homo, tunc incipit.

† *Conf.* l. 7. c. 20, 21: He concludes: Hoc illæ litteræ non habent. Non habent illæ paginæ vultum pietatis hujus, lacrymas confessionis, sacrificium tuum, spiritum contribulatum, cor contritum et humiliatum, populi salutem, sponsam, civitatem, arrham Spiritûs Sancti, poculum pretii nostri: nemo ibi cantat: Nonne Deo subdita erit anima mea? nemo ibi audit vocantem: Venite ad me, qui laboratis.

tinually pressed this same truth upon all others. For indeed this was a fundamental principle with him, that Scripture to be rightly understood must be contemplated from within and not from without ; so that in more than one place he has excellent remarks, of which the application has not now passed away, on the absurdity of taking the account of it—and not of it alone, but of any book which had won a place in the world—not from its friends and admirers, but from its professed foes, from them who start with declaring their hostility to it, or their indifference about it.\*

An especial glory which Holy Scripture had in his eyes was this, that it was not a book for the few learned, but quite as much for the many simple. He delighted to trace in its construction all which marked it out as such, which, in regard of it as of so many other arrangements of God's

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\* *De Util. Cred.* c. 6: Nihil est profecto temeritatis plenius, quam quorumque librorum expositores deserere, qui eos se tenere ac discipulis tradere posse profitentur, et eorum sententiam requirere ab his qui conditoribus illorum atque auctoribus acerbissimum, nescio quâ cogente caussâ, bellum indixerunt. Quis enim sibi unquam libros Aristotelis reconditos et obscuros ab ejus inimico exponendos putavit? ut de his loquar disciplinis, in quibus lector fortasse sine sacrilegio labi potest. Quis denique geometricas litteras Archimedis legere, magistro Epicuro, aut discere voluit? contra quas ille multum pertinaciter, nihil earum, quantum arbitror, intelligens, disserebat. And again, *De Mor. Eccles.* c. 1: Quis enim mediocriter sanus non facile intelligat, Scripturarum expositionem ab iis petendam esse, qui earum doctores se esse profitentur; fierique posse, immo id semper accidere, ut multa in doctis videantur absurda, quæ cum a doctioribus exponuntur, eo laudanda videantur, et eo accipiantur aperta dulcius, quo clausa difficiliter aperiebantur?

providence and grace, set a seal to that word of the Psalmist: "Thou, O God, hast of thy goodness prepared for the poor;" (Ps. Lxviii. 10 ;) and in this respect to trace the glorious prerogative which at once differenced this Book from, and exalted it above, all other books, even the greatest to which man's wisdom had given birth. These last oftentimes repelled all but a few; while this Book of a wisdom far exceeding theirs, invited, welcomed, spread a table for all.\*

Nor did the manifold difficulties and obscurities in the Bible in the least deprive it in his sight of this its

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\* Thus making spiritual application of the words, "All beasts of the field drink thereof," (Ps. civ. 11,) to the streams of Holy Scripture, as those from which *all* may thus quench their thirst, he exclaims (*Enarr. in Ps. ciii*): Non dicit aqua, Lepori sufficio et repellit onagrum; neque hoc dicit, Onager accedat, lepus si accesserit, rapietur. Tam fideliter et temperate fluit, ut sic onagrum satiet ne leporem terreat. Sonat strepitus vocis Tullianæ, Cicero legitur, aliquis liber est, dialogus ejus est, sive ipsius, sive Platonis, seu cujuscumque talium; audiunt imperiti, infirmi minoris cordis, quis audet illuc aspirare? Strepitus aquæ, et forte turbatæ, certe tamen tam rapaciter fluentis, ut animal timidum non audeat accedere et bibere. Cui sonuit, In principio fecit Deus cælum et terram, et non ausus est bibere? Cui sonat Psalmus, et dicat, Multum est ad me? Augustine's comparison here may remind us of the beautiful, but now somewhat overworn image, of Scripture as a river with depths where the elephant may swim, and shallows which the lamb may ford; an image belonging, I believe, originally to Gregory the Great. At least I have never met with it earlier than in the prefatory epistle to his *Commentary on Job*: Divinus etenim sermo sicut mysteriis prudentes exerceat, sic plerumque superficie simplices refovet. . . . Quasi quidam quippe est fluvius, ut ita dixerim, planus et altus, in quo et agnus ambulet, et elephas natet.

distinctive glory and character.\* For in the first place, as he is strong to urge, there was nothing hard in one passage of Scripture, but, if it nearly concerned the salvation of men, the same was set down more plainly in another;† or if not so, then it was assuredly something of which simple men, those to whom the gift of an especial insight into mysteries was not granted, might safely remain ignorant; while these obscurer and more difficult passages, which only after often knocking yielded up their meaning, or, it may be, would not yield it up at all, served many important moral purposes, and could not have been absent from a Book intended to serve such ends

\* *Ep.* 137. c. 5 (*ad Volus.*): Modus autem ipse dicendi quo sancta Scriptura contextitur, quam omnibus accessibilis, quamvis paucissimis penetrabilis. Ea quæ aperta continet, quasi amicus familiaris, sine fuco ad cor loquitur indoctorum atque doctorum. Ea vero quæ in mysteriis occultat, nec ipsa eloquio superbo erigit, quo non audeat accedere mens tardiuscula et inerudita, quasi pauper ad divitem; sed invitat omnes humili sermone, quos non solum manifestâ pascit, sed etiam secretâ exerceat veritate, hoc in promptis quod in reconditis habens. Sed ne aperta fastidirentur, eadem rursus operta desiderantur, desiderata quodam modo renovantur, renovata suaviter intimantur. His salubriter et prava corriguntur, et parva nutriuntur, et magna oblectantur ingenia.

† *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 2. c. 14: In iis quæ aperte in Scripturis posita sunt, inveniuntur omnia quæ continent fidem, moresque vivendi, spem scilicet atque caritatem. *Conf.* l. 6. c. 5: Excipiens omnes populari sinu. The Reformers, who affirmed the *perspicuitas* Scripture against the Romish exaggerations of its extreme obscurity, had, and were forward to urge that they had, Augustine on their side. (See REISER, *Augustinus Veritatis Evangelico-Catholicæ Testis et Confessor*, Frankfort, 1678, pp. 37—41.)

as those for which this Book was given. By them it was proved and seen who were worthy to have mysteries revealed to them, and who not; who were content patiently and humbly to wait at the doors of the Eternal Wisdom, and even when these were not opened to them at their first knocking, to tarry there; to believe that all was well said, was best said, when to their limited faculties it might seem contradictory and confused.\* It was seen, on the other hand, who were ready to go away in a rage; having come to Scripture with no due preparations for understanding it, to assume there was no meaning in that of which they could not grasp the meaning at the first†—no

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\* As in one place he says: *Latere te æquitas potest; esse ibi iniquitas non potest.*

† For himself, there are not a few passages concerning which he is content to avow his own continued ignorance, or at least that he has nothing certain to propose for their interpretation. Nay, in respect of Scripture in general, he exclaims, certainly with no mock modesty, but in entire sincerity (*Ep.* 95): *Quid ipsa divina eloquia, nonne palpantur potius quam tractantur a nobis, dum in multis pluribus quærimus potius quid sentiendum sit, quam definitum aliquid fixumque sentimus?* In respect of all these he lays down that golden rule (*De Gen. ad Litt.* l. 8. c. 5): *Melius est dubitare de rebus occultis, quam litigare de incertis.* Among the passages of which he thus confesses his ignorance is 2 Thess. ii. 7, *who* is meant by *ὁ κατέχων*, (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 19. §. 2;) so too in regard of 1 Pet. iii. 18; see his interesting letter on this hard question of the preaching to the spirits in prison, *Ep.* 164, *ad Euod.* Thus too on the question of the origin of souls, and whether they be ex traduce, or each one a new creation, though he must greatly have inclined to the former of these opinions as a strong confirmation of his dogmatic system, still, weighing the difficulty of the question, and acknowledging the silence in which Scripture has left it, he declares that he

righteousness in that dealing, the righteousness of which they could not at once comprehend; forward to accuse *it* of absurdity or immorality, rather than themselves of a dullness of mental, or, which was more probably the case, of spiritual vision.\* No one, indeed, oftener or more earnestly urges humility as the one condition of so knocking at the door of divine mysteries, that it may be opened to us. He had himself known, as he is forward to confess, what it was to knock in quite another spirit, in a temper in which it was inevitable that he should knock in vain.†

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has come to no certain determination, observing (*Ep.* 190, c. 5): Ubi res naturaliter obscura nostrum modulum vincit, et aperta Divina Scriptura non subvenit, temere hinc aliquid definire humana conjectura præsumit. He satisfies himself with the consideration that after all it is not the birth, but the *new* birth, of the soul, which mainly concerns the Christian, making these beautiful remarks (*Ep.* 190. §. 3, *ad Optat.*): Unde si origo animæ lateat, dum tamen redemptio clareat, periculum non est. Neque enim in Christum credimus, ut *nascamur*, sed ut *renascamur*. See his *Letter to Jerome* (*Ep.* 166) on the same subject.

\* *De Util. Cred.* c. 7.: Nullâ imbutus disciplinâ Terentianum Maurum sine magistro attingere non auderes; Asper, Cornutus, Donatus et alii innumerabiles requiruntur, ut quilibet poëta possit intelligi, cujus carmina et theatri plausus videntur captare: tu in eos libros, qui, quoquo modo se habeant, sancti tamen divinarumque rerum pleni, prope totius generis humani confessione diffamantur, sine duce irruis, et de his sine præceptore audes ferre sententiam; nec si tibi aliqua occurrunt quæ videantur absurda, tarditatem tuam et putrefactum tabe hujus mundi animum, qualis omnium stultorum est, accusas potius, quam eos qui fortasse a talibus intelligi nequeunt. Cf. *In Joh. Tract.* 20: Perversa corda perturbat, sicut pia corda exercet Verbum Dei.

† Thus *Conf.* 1. 3. c. 5: Institui animum intendere in Scripturas



But beside being these exercises of humility, or supplying this touchstone of its absence, these difficulties and obscurities were further profitable in that they hindered men from growing weary of Scripture, as though it was a book which they had entirely mastered, of which they had taken the length and breadth and height and depth, so that it had now no further secrets to reveal to them, no new pastures into which to lead them.\* Then too there was the delight of finding, which was so much the greater after the labour of seeking.† And in the very claims which these harder portions of God's Word made on

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sanctas, ut viderem quales essent. Et ecce video rem non comperitam superbis, neque nudatam pueris; sed incessu humilem, successu excelsam et velatam mysteriis; et non eram ego talis, ut intrare in eam possem, aut inclinare cervicem ad ejus gressus. Visa est mihi indigna quam Tullianæ dignitati compararem. And *Serm.* 51. c. 5: Loquor vobis aliquando deceptus, cum primo puer ad divinas Scripturas ante vellem afferre acumen discutiendi quam pietatem quærendi; ego ipse perversis moribus claudebam januam Domini mei; quum pulsare deberem, ut aperiretur, addebam ut clauderetur. Superbus enim audebam quærere, quod nisi humilis non potest invenire.

\* *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 2. c. 6: Magnifice igitur et salubriter Spiritus S. ita Scripturas sacras modificavit, ut locis apertioribus fami occurreret, obscurioribus autem fastidia detergeret.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxviii. l: Dulcedo inventionis, quam præcessit labor inquisitionis; and again (*Con. Mendac.* c. 10): Quæ propterea figuratis velut amictibus obteguntur, ut sensum pie quærentis exerceant, et ne nuda ac prompta vilescant. Quamvis quæ aliis locis aperte ac manifeste dicta didicimus, cum ea ipsa de abditis eruuntur, in nostrâ quodam modo cognitione renovantur, et renovata dulcescunt. Nec invidentur discentibus, quod his modis obscurantur: sed commendantur magis, ut quasi subtracta desiderentur ardentius, et inveniantur desiderata jucundius.

the powers and faculties of the mind, there was profit ; since there is nothing that so dwarfs its powers and stunts its growth as the having always to do with that which is perfectly easy and at once comprehended, while, on the contrary, the mind gradually expands to the size of that which it has to take in.\*

A portion, or rather a fruit, of this humility, is a right understanding of the relations in which reason and faith stand to one another ; and the light in which Augus-

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\* Thus on the words of the Psalmist, " His eyelids try the children of men," (Ps. xi. 4,) he says (*Enarr. in Ps. x. 5*) : Quippe quibusdam Scripturarum locis obscuris tanquam clausis oculis Dei exercentur [filii hominum,] ut quærant : et rursus quibusdam locis manifestis, tanquam apertis oculis Dei, illuminantur, ut gaudeant. Et ista in sanctis libris crebra opertio atque adapertio tanquam palpebræ sunt Dei quæ interrogant, id est, quæ probant filios hominum, qui neque fatigantur rerum obscuritate, sed exercentur ; neque inflantur cognitione, sed confirmantur. Cf. *Serm. 51. c. 4* ; and again, *Enarr. in Ps. cxlvi. 6* : Non intelligis, parum intelligis, non consequeris : honora Scripturam Dei, honora verbum Dei, etiam non apertum, differ pietate intelligentiam. Noli protervus esse accusare aut obscuritatem, aut quasi perversitatem Scripturæ. Perversum hic nihil est, obscurum autem aliquid est ; non ut tibi negetur, sed ut exerceat accepturum. Ergo quando obscurum est, medicus illud fecit ut pulses. Voluit ut exerceeris in pulsando ; voluit, ut pulsanti aperiret. Pulsando exerceberis ; exercitatus, latior efficeris ; latior factus, capies quod donatur. Ergo noli indignari quod clausum est : mitis esto, mansuetus esto. Noli recalcitrare adversus obscura et dicere, Melius diceretur si sic diceretur. Quando enim potes tu sic dicere aut judicare, quomodo dici expediat ? Sic dictum est, quomodo dici debuit. Non corrigat æger medicamenta sua, novit ea medicus modificare ; ei crede, qui te curat. And again : Si nusquam aperta esset Scriptura, non te pasceret ; si nusquam occulta, non te exerceat.



tine regards the submission in the Christian man of the first to the last, is peculiarly interesting. We see here how it came to pass that he was the Father to whom schoolman and mystic alike appealed. He does demand this submission; he does evermore affirm that the true order is not, as proud man would have it, Know and believe, but rather, Believe and know.\* yet at the same time reason, in the very submission which it makes, does honour to its own worth; since it is by an act of its own that it recognises the reasonableness of putting itself into an higher school, of *postponing* its own exercise. For this he very much dwells on, that it is a *postponing*, not a *renouncing*, of its own exercise. It is subjected indeed, but “subjected in hope,” in the hope that partly in this world and altogether in the world to come any seeming discords between its conclusions and Faith’s mandates shall be removed. This shall be the reward of faith, that what the faithful man now believes, he shall by and bye entirely understand. He knows that the intellectual eye of his soul is now, not indeed extinguished, but diseased, and is therefore liable to see things distorted, not because they are so, but because *it* has lost in part its healthy capacity of vision. Under the treatment of the Great Physician it hopes to recover perfect healthiness of vision; which re-

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\* *Serm.* 43. c. 3: Dicet mihi homo, Intelligam ut credam. Ego ei respondeam, Immo crede ut intelligas. Intellectus enim merces est fidei. And again: Credat in Christum, ut possit intelligere Christum. And in this sense he expounds the words of our Lord, John vii. 17. (*In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 29. §. 6.)

covered, it does not doubt that there will be a perfect identity between what it then sees and what faith has now received and believed.\* Understanding, while it is not the way to faith, shall yet be the reward of faith.

As was to be expected from one who perceived so clearly that God was not to be found out by searching, but was known to them, and to them only, unto whom he was pleased to reveal himself, Augustine speaks often of prayer as that to which alone the shut doors of Scripture mysteries would open; and in his writings there are many devoutest prayers of his own, in which he turns to God as to the one fountain of light and understanding, as to the One who alone can show him the hidden things which are contained in his law, seeking insight and illumination from Him, and desiring above all that he may neither be himself deceived therein, nor deceive others therefrom.†

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\* *Ep.* 120. c. 1: Ut ergo in quibusdam rebus ad doctrinam salutarem pertinentibus quas ratione nondum percipere valeamus, sed aliquando valebimus, fides præcedat rationem, quâ cor mundetur, ut magnæ rationis capiat et perferat lucem, hoc utique rationis est. Et ideo rationabiliter dictum est per prophetam, Nisi credideritis, non intelligetis. (Isai. vii. 9.) Ubi procul dubio discrevit hæc duo, deditque consilium quo prius credamus, ut id quod credimus, intelligere valeamus. . . . Si igitur rationabile est, ut ad magna quædam quæ capi nondum possunt, fides præcedat rationem, procul dubio quantulacunque ratio quæ hoc persuadet, etiam ipsa antecedit fidem.

† This is only a fragment of one of them (*Conf.* 11, c. 2): Domine Deus meus, circumcide ab omni temeritate omnique mendacio interiora et exteriora labia mea. Sint castæ deliciæ meæ Scripturæ tuæ; nec fallar in eis, nec fallam ex eis. Domine attende, et miserere, Domine Deus meus, lux cæcorum et virtus infirmorum, statimque

lux videntium et virtus fortium, attende animam meam, et audi clamantem de profundo. Largire spatium meditationibus nostris in abdita Legis tuæ, neque adversus pulsantes claudas eas. Neque enim frustra scribi voluisti tot paginarum opaca secreta.—It would, I think, help us a little to appreciate the extent to which Augustine modified and moulded the thoughts and feelings, and even the very expressions, of the most eminent Church writers who came after him, if we were to compare, on subjects of moral and theological interest, some of their chiefest utterances with his; as, for example, with some of these his sayings in regard of Scripture, a very beautiful passage on the same subject in Gregory the Great, which in every line shows the influence of his great teacher (*Moral. l. 20. c. i*): Quamvis omnem scientiam atque doctrinam Scriptura sacra sine aliquâ comparatione transcendat; ut taceam quod vera prædicat, quod ad cœlestem patriam vocat, quod a terrenis desideriis ad superna amplectenda cor legentis immutat, quod dictis obscurioribus exercet fortes, et parvulis humili sermone blanditur; quod nec sic clausa est, ut pavesci debeat; nec sic patet ut vilescat; quod usu fastidium tollit, et tanto amplius diligitur quanto amplius meditatur; quod legentis animum humilibus verbis adjuvat, sublimibus sensibus levat: quod aliquo modo cum legentibus crescit: quod a rudibus lectoribus quasi recognoscitur, et tamen doctis semper nova reperitur; ut ergo de rerum pondere taceam, scientias tamen omnes atque doctrinas ipso etiam locutionis suæ more transcendit, quia uno eodemque sermone dum narrat textum prodit mysterium, et sic scit præterita dicere, ut eo ipso noverit futura prædicare, et non immutato dicendi ordine, eisdem ipsis sermonibus novit et anteacta describere, et agenda nuntiare; sicut hæc eadem beati Jobi verba sunt, qui dum sua dicit, nostra prædicat, dumque lamenta propria per sermonem indicat, sanctæ Ecclesiæ causam per intellectum sonat.

## CHAPTER II.

WHILE Augustine does not set too high a value on external helps, on the outward furniture and accomplishment of the interpreter, but recognizes to the full that spiritual things can only be spiritually discerned, that only the Spirit can interpret what was given by the Spirit; he is as far removed as can be from that enthusiasm which would despise these helps, as though they could not do good service in their place, as though they were not also gifts of God. Nor did he sparingly or reluctantly recognize the value of those subsidiary aids, which he did not himself possess, or which he only imperfectly possessed; but attached to them their full honour and importance. In his valuable treatise *De Doctrinâ Christianâ* he images forth the perfect interpreter, such as he ought to be; and gives suggestions which may help to form such, even while he confesses how far off he knows himself from fulfilling his own ideal. Thus he urges the great advantage which he may derive from recurring to the Hebrew and Greek originals, and where this is not possible, from the use of many translations, as checking, throwing light on, and completing, one another. He will have his ideal and perfect interpreter well acquainted with natural history, with music, with history and chronology, with logic, and

with philosophy ;\* for not one of these but will come into play ; some of them will be most important for the great work which he has undertaken. If he has been in Egypt, let him come forth from it as richly furnished with its stuffs as he may, with its silver and its gold, which may afterwards be worked up for the very service of the tabernacle itself.†

Here then may very fitly be considered what was the actual extent of Augustine's own outward equipment for

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\* L. 2. c. 11—42; and for the sake of others who may not possess all this knowledge, he proposes (c. 19) that some one who does, should undertake a Biblical Dictionary, such as since has often been done: Ut non sit necesse Christiano in multis propter pauca laborare, sic video posse fieri, si quem eorum qui possunt, benignam sane operam fraternæ utilitati delectet impendere, ut quoscumque terrarum locos quæve animalia vel herbas atque arbores, sive lapides vel metalla incognita, speciesque quaslibet Scriptura commemorat, ea generatim digerens, sola exposita litteris mandet.

† *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 2. c. 40: Philosophi autem qui vocantur, si qua forte vera et fidei nostræ accommodata dixerunt, maxime Platonici, non solum formidanda non sunt, sed ab eis etiam tanquam injustis possessoribus in usum nostrum vindicanda. Sicut enim Ægyptii non solum idola habebant et onera gravia, quæ populus Israël detestaretur et fugeret, sed etiam vasa atque ornamenta de auro et argento, et vestem, quæ ille populus exiens de Ægypto sibi potius tanquam ad usum meliorem clanculo vindicavit, non auctoritate propriâ, sed præcepto Dei, ipsis Ægyptiis nescienter commodantibus ea, quibus non bene utebantur, sic doctrinæ omnes Gentilium non solum simulata et superstitiosa figmenta gravesque sarcinas supervacui laboris habent, . . . sed etiam liberales disciplinas usui veritatis aptiores ; . . . quod eorum tanquam aurum et argentum, quod non ipsi instituerunt, sed de quibusdam quasi metallis divinæ providentiæ, quæ ubique infusa sunt, eruerunt, . . . debet ab eis auferre Christianus ad usum justum prædicandi Evangelii.

the work of an interpreter. It is almost needless to observe that he possessed no knowledge whatsoever of Hebrew. Indeed there were but two of the early Fathers, Origen in the Greek Church, and he but slightly,\* and Jerome in the Latin, who did so. It is, as he declares, a *lingua incognita* to him, and he everywhere proclaims his entire unacquaintance with it.† His knowledge of Punic, (for that he knew it we may, I think, certainly conclude,‡) would no doubt materially have helped him, had he been inclined seriously to grapple with the difficulties of the Hebrew tongue. Bochart, Gesenius, and others who have studied the few remains of this tongue which have come down to us, so express their regret at the almost entire perishing of all its monuments, and at our deprivation thus of all the helps that might have been derived from it, as to show that the resemblance between the languages could not have been slight; even as we might have concluded, *a priori*, that the Punic, brought as it was from

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\* See Huet's *Origeniana*, l. 2. c. 2, for proofs how slight and inaccurate his acquaintance with Hebrew was (*Judaicis litteris leviter tinctus*.)

† *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 2. c. 23; *Conf.* l. 11. c. 3; *Enarr. in Ps.* cxxxvi. 7; et passim.

‡ It seems implied in such language as this (*Serm.* 167. c. 3): *Proverbium notum est Punicum, quod quidem Latine vobis dicam, quia Punice non omnes nostis*; cf. *Exp. Inchoat. in Rom.* §. 13. Yet it would not seem a very common knowledge among the provincials, for he complains more than once of the difficulty of obtaining presbyters who were acquainted with the language for some churches in country districts, where no other tongue was understood by the population.



Phœnicia to the northern coast of Africa, must retain a considerable resemblance to its mother, or, rather, its sister dialect. The fact of this connexion between the languages Augustine several times notes, and not unfrequently adduces words which the two had in common.\* Yet with the exception of such slight assistances to his exposition as those indicated below, it did not do him any effectual service in his work.

Being thus ignorant of Hebrew, Augustine's nearest approach to the original text of the Old Testament was through the Septuagint version. There was a double misfortune here; first, that this version, as nearly all would now admit, with a multitude of isolated felicities of translation, and resting evidently on a true tradition in regard of many difficult words and passages, having, too, had great honour put upon it in the use which the apostles made of it, our Lord himself setting his seal on one memorable occasion to its development of the original text, (cf. Matt. xix. 5 with Gen. ii. 24,) is still infinitely faulty, full of intentional and unintentional departures from the original; and secondly, that he

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\* *Serm.* 113. c. 2: *Istæ enim linguæ sibi significationis quâdam vicinitate sociantur.* Cf. *In Joh. Tract.* 15. § 27. Thus he notices that Baal, which appears in so many of the Carthaginian names, Hannibal, Asdrubal, meant "lord" in Punic no less than in Hebrew; (*Quæst. in Jud.* qu. 16;) that Edom was Punic for blood, as in Hebrew it is applied to aught that is blood-red; (*Enarr. in Ps.* cxxxvi. 7;) he mentions *Messiah* and *Mammon* as being Punic no less than Hebrew words: and notes (*Loc. in Gen.* i. 24) the similarity between the languages as not merely of word but of idiom.

shared with well-nigh all the early Church in an extravagant estimate of its merits, so that he yielded himself to this untrustworthy guide with the most unquestioning confidence. He was not disinclined\* to give credit to the legend told by Aristéas, and repeated with various modifications by Philo, Josephus, Justin Martyr,† and others, in regard of the miraculous consent of its seventy-two interpreters shut up in their seventy-two separate cells, a fiction which Jerome characterized in the language which it deserved;‡ Nay further, he appears to have recognized a prophetic spirit in them; and not to have doubted that the same Spirit which dictated the original, did also guide them and preserve them from all error: so that he will not allow any such in their version, and is in nothing offended by some plain deviations of theirs from the original text: thus when they make Jonah to proclaim, “Yet *three* days and Nineveh shall be overthrown,” he persuades himself that they did not this without authority, and that there is a meaning in their *three*, as well as in the *forty* of the Hebrew text.§ This belief in the faultlessness of the Septuagint caused him at first altogether to disapprove of, and never to look otherwise than coldly on, Jerome’s correction and revision of this version, or rather new transla-

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\* *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 2. c. 15; *Ep.* 28. c. 2 (*ad Hieron.*); *Qu. in Gen.* qu. 169; *De Civ. Dei*, l. 18. c. 42, 43.

† *Coh. ad Græc.* c. 13.

‡ *Præf. in Pent.*: Nescio quis primus auctor cellulas Alexandriæ mendacio suo extruxerit.

§ *De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 66; *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 4. § 15; *Qu. in Gen.* qu. 169; *De Civ. Dei*, l. 15. c. 14. § 2; and c. 23. § 3.



tion from the Hebrew.\* He seemed to have counted this translation too sacred to be touched, or at any rate that the danger of unsettling men's minds through altering anything in so time-honoured a version exceeded the advantages which might be derived from the removal of any incorrectnesses in it, if such indeed there were there.

In regard of Augustine's own knowledge of Greek, there has certainly been a tendency among those who in later times have estimated his merits, or rather his demerits, (for many have had an eye only for these,) as an expositor of Scripture, to exaggerate his deficiencies herein. It is quite true that his knowledge of Greek was irregularly gotten; that he did not in his earlier years lay strong and sure foundations on which to build his later acquisitions; that he speaks of an early distaste which he had for the language; though from his own account it was plainly no more than a boy's distaste for the labour needful to overcome the first difficulties in a foreign tongue.† It is true too that he himself often speaks slightingly of his own acquaintance with the original language of the New Testament, and confesses that, where he had to do with abstruse and recondite matters in theology or philosophy, he preferred to read a

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\* *Ep.* 28. c. 2; 82, 5; 71. c. 2 3 (*ad Hieron.*): in which last Epistle he gives a curious account of the uproar which followed in some African church, when a bishop attempted to introduce Jerome's translation directly from the Hebrew instead of that from the Septuagint, to which the people had hitherto been accustomed.

† *Conf.* l. 1. c. 13, 14.

Latin translation to a Greek original;\* yet when one and another speak of him as “unacquainted alike with the Greek and Hebrew tongues,”† and a third of his everywhere betraying a “shameful ignorance” of Greek,‡ in this there is undoubted exaggeration and injustice. We have so many examples of a tact and skill not inconsiderable with which he draws the distinction between words that in their meaning border on one another, and of other acquaintance with the language, as would require any such statement to be very materially modified.§

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\* *De Trin.* l. 3. c. 1; cf. *Conf.* l. 7. c. 9.

† WALCH, *Bib. Patrist.* p. 352: Augustinus extitit, ut alii, Ebrææ et Græcæ linguæ ignarus; ROSENMULLER, *Hist. Intt. S. Ss.* v. 3. p. 404: Imperitus non tantum Hebrææ, sed etiam Græcæ linguæ. Compare RICH. SIMON, *Hist. Crit. du V. T.* v. 3. p. 9.

‡ Turpem litterarum Græcarum incitiam passim prodidit; (WINER, *Annott. in Ep. ad Gal.* p. 22.) But single mistakes ought not to go for much: Winer himself not many pages from the place where he expresses this judgment, writes *inurerit* for *inusserit*; yet is he in the main not merely a correct but an elegant writer of Latin; and Reiche, the author of commentary very far from unlearned on the Romans, deliberately derives ἀποθώμεθα (Rom. xiii. 12) from ἀπωθεῖν, p. 458. For a juster and not too favourable an estimate of Augustine's attainments in Greek see his *Life*, in the last volume of the Benedictine edition of his works, p. 5.

§ A few examples in proof will not be out of place. Thus he draws an important distinction between πνεῦμα and πνοή, with reference to John xx. 22 and Gen. ii. 7, and the attempt of some to make the first act of insufflation, “He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul,” equivalent to the second, “He breathed on them and saith, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.” (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 13. c. 24.) The distinction drawn by Döderlein, (*Synon.* v. 5, p. 95,) between spirare and flare, spiritus and flatus, supplies an interesting parallel and confirmation. He has a fine discussion on the relation between

So too Augustine used his Latin text with frequent, if not continual, reference to the original, oftentimes rectifying the errors of the former by an appeal to the latter.

λατρεία, θρησκεία, εὐσέβεια, θεοσέβεια, and their Latin equivalents. (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 10. c. 1.) He handles certainly not ill the difficult synonymes at 1 Tim. ii. 1; προσευχαί, δεήσεις, ἐντεύξεις, εὐχαρισταί. (*Eph.* 149. c. 2.) He distinguishes between πρεσβύτης and γέρον, the elder and the old man; (*Enarr. in Ps.* lxx. 18; cf. *Quæst. sup. Gen.* l. 1. qu. 70;) though it is difficult to agree with him when he complains that the Latin is poorly furnished with words to express the finer shades of distinction in regard of old age, as contemplated either in its moral or physical aspects: on the contrary, as we might have expected beforehand, the language is singularly rich in these. (DÖDERLEIN'S *Synon.* v. 4. pp. 89—95.) He distinguishes between πλεονεξία and φιλαργυρία, showing how much larger the first is in its significance than the last; (*Enarr. in Ps.* cxviii. 16;) again, between ἄμωμος and ἄσπιλος, (*Qu. in Lev.* l. 1. qu. 40;) between ἐπένδυμα, superindumentum, and ἐπωμῖς, superhumale, (*Qu. in Jud.*, l. 7. qu. 41;) between πρωτότοκος, πρωτογενής, and μονογενής, (*Qu. in Deut.*, l. 5. qu. 23;) between ἀπαρχαὶ and πρωτογενήματα, (*Qu. in Num.*, l. 4. qu. 32;) between δῶρον and δόμα, (*Loc. de Num.* l. 4.) ἐνταφιάζειν and θάπτειν, (*Loc. de Gen.* l. i.) ἄλογος and ἀμαθής, (*Loc. de Gen.* l. 2.) καιρός and χρόνος, (*Eph.* 197. § 2, 3;) σκεῦος and ἀγγεῖον, (*Quæst. in Lev.*, l. 3. qu. 51;) λατρεύειν and δουλεύειν, (*Qu. in Lev.*, l. 3. qu. 66;) δίκαιοσύνη and δικαίωμα. (*Enarr. in Ps.* cxviii. 56.) So, too, he notes that ἔκστασις may mean more than fear or great astonishment; it may be as much as mentis alienatio, (ἐξίστημι,) and is therefore a peculiarly fit word for expressing the condition of mind in which men receive communications from an higher world; (*Qu. in Gen.* l. i. qu. 80; *Enarr. in Ps.* ciii. 11;) that ἀδολεσχεῖν, though used in the Septuagint in a good, is oftener used in classic Greek in a bad, sense. He gives (*Qu. in Exod.* l. 2. qu. 177) the right explanation of πλάγια, that it means the flanks, and cannot mean the front and rear, and of κλίτη. (*Qu. in Exod.* l. 2. qu. 131.) He notices the usage of παιδεία in the Greek Scriptures as different from the classical, that it is not instruction generally, as in other Greek, but

Thus in one place\* he silences a Manichæan objection, showing that it merely rested on a carelessness of the Latin interpreter. Nor was he an uncritical taker up of the first text of the original which came in his way, but laboured earnestly after the most accurate that was attainable, and with this end spared no labour in the comparison

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always *per molestias* eruditio. (*Enarr. in Ps. cxviii. 66.*) He takes note of a difficulty in the use of ὀρθρίζω at Judg. ix. 33, LXX., ὀρθρος being the morning *before* sunrise, and not, as it seems to be used there, *after*. (*Qu. in Jud. qu. 46.*) So also he observes a double use of παράκλησις, and the verb from which it is derived, that it is both exhortation and consolation. (*Enarr. in Ps. cxviii. 52.*) Where he gives derivations of Greek words they are in general correct; thus of τραγίλαφος, (*Annot. in Job. c. 39;*) of ἄτομος, (*Serm. 362, c. 17;*) of παράπτωμα, (*Qu. in Lev. l. 3. qu. 20;*) he corrects the popular derivation of πάσχα, as though it was from πάσχειν, showing this to be impossible; (*Enarr. in Ps. cxl. 10;*) he errs indeed in πλημμέλεια, not making it a violation of μέλος, a disharmony, but deriving it from μέλει, curæ est; (*Qu. in Lev., l. 3. qu. 20.*) He is acquainted with the force of the middle future as distinguished from the active. (*Qu. in Exod., 78.*) He corrects the Latin version, which had rendered ἀλαῖαι (Exod. xxvi. 3) as if it had been ἀυλαί, vestibula, instead of cortinæ. He observes how inadequate a rendering of ἀορασαί (Gen. xix. 11) cæcitas is, and that the Latin has in fact no word exactly corresponding; (*De Civ. Dei, l. 22. c. 19;*) he explains how compeditos had found its way into the Latin text, Ps. lxxxix. (xc.) 12, seemingly as the rendering of πεπαιδευμένους, namely, that the translator must have had in his copy πεπεδημένους. Now I would not of course affirm that all which he says on these and on other like matters which might be adduced can always be maintained without modification; or that the knowledge here displayed is very profound; yet in this handful of observations, gathered almost at random from his works, there are at all events evidences of something better than "a disgraceful ignorance of Greek."

\* *Con. Faust., l. 11. c. 4.*

of MSS. It is well known that of the various readings which exist in the MSS. of the New Testament which have come down to us, all or nearly all of any importance must have found their way very early into the text, certainly before the middle of the third century.\* Augustine often alludes to the weightiest of these, and draws them and their external authority and internal probability into consideration when explaining the passages in which they occur.†

And generally he is well acquainted with the primary rules of textual criticism, however the scientific elaboration and full development of them may have been, and

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 11. c. 2: *Paucæ, et sacrarum literarum studiosis notissimæ sententiarum varietates.*

† Thus he alludes (*Ep.* 193. § 10,) to the more than one variety of reading that finds place at 1 Cor. xv. 31, with the view of considering how far there may be help in one or other of these readings, for the removing any difficulty which the passage may possess. Again he alludes (*Ep.* 149. § 28) to the remarkable omission in some MSS. of the  $\mu\eta$  at Col. ii. 18. It is actually omitted by the Cod. Vaticanus, which Lachmann has followed. Thus, too, he enters on the question, one of the hardest in textual criticism, whether  $\epsilon\iota\kappa\eta$  should be admitted or not into the text at Matt. v. 22: in his Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount he has given it room; but afterwards (*Retract.* l. 1. c. 19) withdraws it, because, as he says, the Greek MSS. had it not. He takes no notice of the *palam* found in many Latin copies of his time, at Matt. vi. 4, because, as he says, he finds nothing to correspond with it in the Greek: I need not observe that the modern critical editions omit the  $\epsilon\nu\ \tau\tilde{\omega}\ \phi\alpha\nu\epsilon\rho\tilde{\omega}$  of the received text. At the same time it must be allowed that not unfrequently he takes up with a plainly faulty Latin translation, and even discusses at length a difficulty which would have at once disappeared, if he had turned to his Greek copies.

naturally were, the work of a later age. Thus he lays down a canon which all who in modern times have laboured at fixing the text have duly recognized; namely, that a reading which involves an apparent doctrinal or other difficulty is to be preferred, other things being equal, to one which will make every thing easy and smooth.\* In obedience to this canon he will not evade the difficulty of a reference in regard of the thirty pieces of silver to "*Jeremy* the prophet" (Matt. xxvii. 9,) by urging the fact, of which yet he is entirely aware, that for "*Jeremy*" in some MSS. "*Zechariah*" was found written; since, quite apart from the fact of the preponderance of diplomatic authority in favour of the former reading, it is altogether inexplicable how "*Jeremy*," not being the true reading, should have found its way into the text; while, on the contrary, nothing is so easy as to explain how, albeit the true reading, it should yet have by some been omitted, or exchanged for "*Zechariah*."†

Having spoken thus much of his knowledge and his ignorance of those foreign languages, which were or might have been to him, subsidiary aids in his exposition of Scripture, a few remarks may fitly follow on his use and command of that language, in which he has deposited all the rich stores and treasures of his mind. If it be true, as has been sometimes said, that the style is the man, we might assume beforehand that where the man was so

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\* *Difficilior lectio præstat procliviori.*

† *De Cons. Evang.* l. 3. c. 7.



genuine and so true, there would be nothing unreal or affected in the style. And it would have been in many ways affectation for a Christian writer of the fourth or fifth century to have aimed at writing the Latin of the Augustan age. As far as a large acquaintance with the best writers in the language would have carried him in such an attempt, had he been inclined to make it, he was not unprovided; nor can his departure from the standard of classical Latinity be laid to any ignorance of the best models. Amid all the errors of his youth, his classical studies were never intermitted.\* That mighty longing which always possessed him, drove him as eagerly into these studies, so long as he believed that from such sources he could draw that which would slake the thirst of his soul, as afterwards to those fountains which indeed could do it. And remembering that he professed rhetoric and grammar, or more properly literature, not at Tagaste only, but at Carthage, at Milan, and at Rome, we may confidently presume that his familiarity with those authors who alone would have furnished him with a needful preparation was not superficial nor inaccurate; for he certainly was not the man to undertake to teach others that which he did not adequately possess himself. But indeed we have more immediate evidence of the fact. All his writings give testimony of the extent and range of his acquaintance with the literature of Rome. His greatest

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\* On the extent of these studies and the diligence with which he pursued them, see his *Confessions*, l. 4. c. 16.

familiarity is perhaps with Cicero and with Varro. Many important fragments of the latter, especially of his *Divine Antiquities*, have come down to us only through their incorporation into his great prose epic and apology for the Christian Church, *The City of God*. But his range of authors is not limited: he makes allusion to almost the whole circle of Latin classics, and draws his illustration freely from them all.

Yet for all this, his own Latin is not the attempted revival of something gone by, but the language as it has been modified in the course of four centuries, and by the new, most of all by the Christian, influences which had been brought the meanwhile to bear upon it. Nor does his diction want signs of that further transformation which the language should presently undergo.\* The words that figure in the glossaries of later Latinity already begin to

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\* A slight but very curious anticipation of the coming time in Augustine's Latin is the frequent recurrence in it of rhymes, and these evidently not unsought, or at any rate not unwelcomed when they offered themselves; such for instance as the following, in all or nearly all of which there is an evident intention of giving point to the sentence by their aid: thus a definition of faith: *Quid est enim fides, nisi credere quæ non vides?* (*In Joh. Tract.* 40;) the relation of the two Testaments to one another: *In Novo Testamento patent, quæ in Vetere latent*; the mystical meaning of John xxi. 9, 13: *Piscis assus Christus est passus*; (*In Joh. Tract.* 123;) on Stephen's keenest rebuke of his countrymen, whom he prayed for notwithstanding; (*Acts vii.* 51, 60;) *Lingua clamat, cor amat*; or exhortations such as the following: *Hoc agamus bene, ut illud habeamus plene*; (*Serm.* 104. c. 3;) *Noli amare impedimentum, si non vis invenire tormentum.* (*Serm.* 311. c. 4.)



appear in his pages, although in no great number, and chiefly in his familiar epistles, or discourses addressed to the multitude; and then very often they are wilfully introduced that his hearers may understand him the better. His classical culture preserves him for the most from phrases and idioms of a needless offence, and in a great degree from the harsh Africanisms of Tertullian and Arnobius. Nor are there any tokens of that *reluctancy* in the language to yield itself freely to all the uses whereto he would put it, of which we are so often painfully conscious in reading the former of those writers. On the contrary, his diction appears ever as the willing servant of his thought;\* full and free, it is a garment in

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\* One great test of mastery over a language is familiarity with its synonyms, and power of distinguishing accurately between them. In this Augustine excels, having an evident pleasure in tracing such finer distinctions, which he does often with no common subtlety and skill. Thus he distinguishes between flagitium and facinus: Quod agit indomita cupiditas ad corrumpendum animum et corpus suum, flagitium vocatur; quod autem agit ut alteri noceat, facinus dicitur; (*De Doctr. Christ.* l. 3. c. 10; cf. DÖDERLEIN'S *Synon.* v. 2, p. 145;) again, between delictum and peccatum, (*Qu. in Lev.* qu. 20,) keeping clear of the common error, which makes one the sin of omission, the other of commission; (see DÖDERLEIN'S *Synon.* v. 2, p. 139;) rather the delictum is the *desertio boni*; peccatum, *perpetratio mali*. So too, between æmulatio and invidia; (ζῆλος and φθόνος, *Expos. ad Gal.* v. 20;) æmulatio est dolor animi, cum alius pervenit ad rem, quam duo pluresve appetebant, et nisi ab uno haberi non potest: Invidia vero dolor animi est, cum indignus videtur aliquis assequi etiam quod tu non appetebas. So also he discriminates between arrha and pignus; (*Serm.* 23. c. 8, 9, and *Serm.* 378;) curiosus and studiosus; (*De Util. Cred.* c. 9;) lætitia and gaudium, cautio and

the flowing and graceful folds of which his thoughts are amply yet not redundantly arrayed. He knows what the language can do, and oftentimes tests its powers to the uttermost; his works, indeed, are full of passages of an almost unequalled eloquence.\* Now and then, it is true,

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metus, volo and cupio; (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 14. c. 8;) astutus, prudens, and sapiens; (*De Gen. ad Lit.* l. 9. c. 2;) precor, imprecor, deprecor. (*Ep.* 149. c. 2.) His etymologies too are almost always correct; as prodigia, quod porro dicant; (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 28. c. 8;) adulterium, quasi ad alterum; (*Serm.* 51, c. 13;) or if they are such as some would call in question, such as his derivation of religio from religare, rather than relegere, (*Retract.* l. 1. c. 13,) yet here, if he has many against him, yet also some with him, and he was aware of, and had once inclined to, the preferable etymology. (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 10. c. 3.) His derivation of abominor as though it was abhominor, so to hate one as not to esteem him a man, (*Serm.* 9. c. 9,) might seem indeed in more ways than one to militate against his Latin scholarship; but elsewhere he rightly derives it from omen; (*Retract.* l. 1. c. 13;) and I have no doubt that the other, like so many of the ancient etymologies, which are quite misunderstood when they are taken in any other spirit, was intended for a *calembourg* and no more. In like manner when he says, Est enim severitas, quasi sæva veritas, Dei, (*Serm.* 171. c. 5,) he doubtless offers this as a *moral* rather than *philological* etymology,—though indeed Döderlein puts the word in connexion with verus, (*Synon.* v. 1, p. 77,) and other etymologists with sævus.

\* As for instance this passage, upon the Church and her teaching (*De Mor. Eccles.* c. 30): Tu pueriliter pueros, fortiter juvenes, quiete senes, prout cujusque non corporis tantum sed et animi ætas est, exerce et doces. Tu feminas veris suis non ad explendam libidinem, sed ad propagandam prolem, et ad rei familiaris societatem, castâ et fidei obedientiâ subjecis. Tu viros conjugibus, non ad illudendum imbecillio rem sensum sed sinceri amoris legibus subjecis. Tu parentibus filios liberâ quâdam servitute jungis, parentes filiis piâ dominatione præponis. Tu fratribus fratres religionis vinculo fir-

in the antithetic pointedness of his sentences, though the antithesis never perils, but is made alway to subserve, the sense, or again in the sustained balance of some long-drawn periods, we are just reminded that he had once taught rhetoric in the capitals of Africa and of Italy.

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*miore atque artiore quam sanguinis nectis. Tu omnis generis propinquitatem et affinitatis necessitudinem, servatis naturæ voluntatisque nexibus, mutuâ caritate constringis. Tu dominis servos non tam conditionis necessitate, quam officii delectatione doces adhærere. Tu dominos servis, summi Dei communis Domini consideratione placabiles, et ad consulendum quam coërcendum propensiores facis. Tu cives civibus, gentes gentibus, et prorsus homines primorum parentum recordatione, non societate tantum sed quâdam etiam fraternitate conjungis. Doces reges prospicere populis, mones populos se subdere regibus. Quibus honor debeat, quibus affectus, quibus reverentia, quibus timor, quibus consolatio, quibus admonitio, quibus cohortatio, quibus disciplina, quibus objurgatio, quibus supplicium, sedulo doces, ostendens quemadmodum et non omnibus omnia, et omnibus caritas, et nulli debeat injuria.*

## CHAPTER III

IN the first chapter of this essay I considered and sought to illustrate by quotations from Augustine's own writings the tone and temper of gratitude and affection, of humility and reverence, with which he approached, and would fain lead others to approach, the word of God. I brought this into earliest consideration, as being indeed the source out of which all his excellencies in the unfolding of its deeper and spiritual meaning had their rise; as that for the absence of which all treasures of knowledge and learning, had he possessed them, would have been an insufficient compensation: and then in the next chapter I sought to estimate, as also important, though in a far inferior degree, in what measure he was himself outwardly furnished and accomplished for the work which he undertook. I shall now proceed to gather from his writings some of those principles and canons of interpretation, which either adopting from others, or generalizing from his own experience, he has laid down, as needful to be observed, if Scripture interpretation is not to be abandoned to merest hazard and caprice; which I shall do without implying thereby that he was himself always faithful to these rules; and I shall at the same time endeavour to

trace such external circumstances of his own position, as may be supposed most effectually to have wrought in the forming and further unfolding of his system of interpretation.

We may first observe that Augustine very often presses excellently well the duty of interpreting Scripture according to the analogy of faith ; in other words, that no single sayings there shall receive such an explanation as shall put them in contradiction with the whole body and complex of doctrinal truth drawn from other Scriptures ; that the explanation which does place any single passage in this opposition must, however plausible it may seem, at once be rejected ; since all interpretation must be, so to speak, *pan-harmonic*. Thus he is refuting those who were fain to find in 1 Cor. iii. 15, a declaration that evil livers should yet, if only they were members of the Catholic Church, after passing through certain purgatorial fires, attain to final salvation ; and who said that the apostle had these in his eye, when he spoke of some who should be saved “yet so as by fire.” This cannot be his meaning, Augustine answers, because the entire testimony of Scripture in a multitude of distinctest passages avouches the contrary to this ; which passages it would be absurd to override and overrule by that which would be a *doubtful* interpretation of an obscure passage at the best, even if these were not there to prove that it is a *false* one.\* And he well lays

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\* *De Octo Dulcit. Quæst.* qu. 1 ; *De Fide et Oper.* c. 15 ; *De Fide, Spe, et Carit.* c. 57 : Quidam ita intelligendum putant, ut qui, quum

down this as a general canon, that the obscurer passages are ever to receive their interpretation from the clearer, and not *vice versâ*.\*

In regard of the tropical language of Scripture, Augustine often calls to notice that in it certain figures are not indissolubly tied to certain corresponding realities of the kingdom of heaven, that to assume that they are so, would often altogether lead us from the right path. He recognizes the freedom with which the inspired writers and the Lord himself appropriated from the great storehouse of imagery in nature and in art, that which was fittest for the setting forth of that truth which at the moment they had in hand, without thereby forbidding that the very same image, contemplated indeed on some other side, should presently set forth an altogether different, nay opposite, truth. Thus Christ is a lion, (Rev. v. 5,) and Satan is a lion; (1 Pet. v. 8;) the truth is leaven, (Matt. xiii. 33,) and malice, wickedness, and hypocrisy are leaven; (1 Cor. v. 8; Luke xii. 1;) for, to use a modern illustration, the imagery of Scripture is not so much stereotype, never to

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fidem habeant, male operantur, per quasdam ignis pœnas possint purgari ad salutem percipiendam. . . . Si ergo innumerabilia quæ per omnes Scripturas sine ambiguitate dicta reperiri possunt [de necessitate bonorum operum] falsa erunt, poterit verus esse ille intellectus. Sed quia hæc apostolica manifestissima et apertissima testimonia falsa esse non possunt, illud quod obscure dictum est sic intelligendum est, ut his manifestis non inveniatur esse contrarium.

\* *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 2. c. 14: Ad obscuras locutiones illustrandas de manifestioribus sumantur exempla, et quædam certarum sententiarum testimonia dubitationem incertis auferant.

be shifted any more from the place which it once has occupied, but rather like those moveable types which may continually be brought into new combinations; or to use Augustine's own comparison, it resembles the letters of the alphabet, which, still the same, yet help now to compose words expressive of what is best, and then presently, it may be, of what is worst. Yet no one would affirm that because D has done duty in Diabolus, it is therefore an impiety to use it also in Deus.\*

Again, he insists strongly on the vanity of appealing to any but to plain and literal passages of Scripture for the laying of first foundations of doctrines, most of all when in controversy with gainsayers and opposers. Afterwards, when these foundations are securely laid, the confirmations of the truth, which may be superinduced from the allegorical and figurative, will fitly find their place; but to begin with these is like painting on a cloud or building in

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\* Thus *Serm.* 32, c. 6: Non enim semper in Scripturis eadem significantur rebus certis. Non semper mons Dominum significat, non semper lapis Dominum significat, non semper leo Dominum significat, non semper bonum, non semper malum: sed pro locis Scripturarum, quo pertinent cætera circumstantia ipsius lectionis. Quemadmodum litteræ in tot millibus verborum atque sermonum ipsæ repetuntur, non augentur; . . . quum una littera variis in locis ponitur, et pro loco valet, non unam rem valet. This last thought he further unfolds, *Enarr. in Ps.* ciii. 21: Si audieris litteram primam in nomine Dei, et putaveris eam semper ibi ponendam, delebis eam in nomine diaboli, ab eâdem enim litterâ incipit nomen Dei a quâ incipit nomen diaboli; et nihil tam disjunctum quam Deus et diabolus. And finally, *Enarr. in Ps.* viii. 8: Hæc regula in omni allegoriâ retinenda est, ut pro sententiâ præsentis loci consideretur quod per similitudinem dicitur.



the air. Moreover, it is idle for us to expect that adversaries will be convinced by these passages, which, if they are capable of our meaning, are also capable of another, which the adversary may refuse to admit to have any deeper meaning at all. Proofs, therefore, of this character should be laid aside for the time, not because they are false, but because they do not belong to this stage of the argument, inasmuch as they do not of necessity carry conviction with them;\* afterwards they will be good for the delight and yet further confirmation of friends, though not for the conviction or putting to silence of foes. They are to be regarded as the ornamental fringe, never as the main woof or texture, of the argument. The thrice repeated "Holy" of the seraphim in Isaiah's vision (Isai. vi.) is good for us, who already, and on other grounds, have believed the doctrine of a Holy Trinity, but it would be idle to seek to convince a denier of that blessed doctrine thereby.

How well, again, he warns against that exaggeration of one side of a truth, which, with the overlooking or slighting of the other, of that which should balance, counterpoise, and complete it, has been the fruitful occasion of so many heresies which have afflicted the Church; for the half truth is very often no truth at all, at least to them who

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\* *De Unit. Eccl.* c. 5: Illa interim seponenda sunt, quæ obscure posita et figurarum velaminibus involuta, et secundum nos et secundum illos possunt interpretari. . . . Aperta veritas clamet, luceat, in obturatas aures irrumpat, dissimulantium oculos feriat.

hold it with the ignoring of the other half.\* Thus was it, as he often observes, with the Sabellian and the Arian. Each had his array of texts to appeal to; but neither had taken in the whole circle of Catholic teaching in regard of the relation of the Son to the Father, and therefore neither had the truth. Their errors he likens to Scylla and Charybdis, sailing between which, he that would avoid making perilous shipwreck of the faith, must give all diligence that in his eagerness to keep as far as possible aloof from the one, he does not entangle himself in the dangers of the other. It is not sufficient for his safety that he avoid one; he must avoid the other at the same time. But the conflict with *these* forms of error was already fought and gained before Augustine's time. He has indeed oftentimes instructive matter on them both,† as being each of them the partial exaggeration of certain scriptures with the overlooking of others, yet not compelled thereto by present and urgent needs of the Church; for he himself speaks of these heresies, the first as altogether past, the other as just alive and no more.‡

But in other cases it was otherwise. It was this accu-

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\* *De Fide et Oper.* § 5, 7: Errant homines, non servantes modum: et quum in unam partem procliviter ire cæperint, non respiciunt divinæ auctoritatis alia testimonia, quibus possint ab illâ intentione revocari, et in eâ quæ ex utrisque temperata est veritate et moderatione consistere. . . . Nos vero ad sanam doctrinam pertinere arbitramur ex utrisque testimoniis vitam sententiamque moderari.

† See for instance, *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 36. § 9.

‡ *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 40. § 7.

sation of overlooking and slighting one-half of the truth of Scripture in their blind and passionate urging of the other, which he found need especially to bring against the Donatists. They of that schism refused, as is well known, to hold communion with the Church Catholic; and it was exactly thus that they justified their schism. They laid hold on all the declarations in Scripture which spoke of the holiness of the Church, its freedom from impurity; overlooking all those others which characterized that holiness in the present time as imperfect even in the faithful themselves; disregarding too all those, which declared or implied that, until the end of the present æon, with the faithful sinners would be mingled; and because they did not find this perfect freedom from evil in the Church Catholic, they would not admit it to be the Church at all. Augustine had here to show that what they advanced was not so much untrue as one-sided. Yet we can scarcely affirm that his controversy with these fierce and fanatic separatists, greatly as it occupied him, (for Donatism was the running sore of the African Church, and one which never entirely ceased till the body, and the disease which afflicted the body, perished together,) contributed in any important measure to the forming of his system of interpretation. Its influence is felt to a certain degree in his exegesis, as in the manner in which it causes him to *weight* certain statements of Scripture; but Donatism, so far as argument was concerned, (for practically the case was very different) was more easily disposed of than that it could have seriously moulded or affected him.

The wandering rabble of that faction was indeed formidable enough, when in some remote district, men and women, rudely but terribly armed, at first with clubs only, "Israels" as they called them,\* but afterwards with slings and hatchets, lances and swords,† and with their cry of Deo Laudes, which Augustine describes as more dreaded than a lion's roar,‡ they laid wait for in the way, or surrounded by night the house of, some member, most often some priest, or even bishop of the Catholic Church; pulled it down or burned it over his head, and forcing him thence, or even from the very altar itself,§ so wounded and beat him that perhaps he presently expired; or after having thus maltreated, dragged him till nearly dead through filthy pools;|| or pouring quick lime, and when they found that of that alone their victims sometimes recovered, lime mingled with vinegar into his eyes, deprived him amid excruciating torments, of vision;¶ or in their milder mood, clothing him in some masquerade dress of scorn, paraded him through the neighbouring villages, and after many days hardly let him go;\*\* or harnessing him in a mill, compelled him with many stripes to turn it;†† or when one of them, in that insane spirit of self-destruction which possessed them, meeting a Catholic re-

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\* *Enarr. in Ps.* x. 3. † *Con. Lit. Petil.* l. 2. c. 88, 96.

‡ *Enarr. in Ps.* cxxxii. 1. § *Con. Cresc.* l. 3. c. 43.

|| *Con. Cresc.* l. 3. c. 48; *Ep.* 88. § 6.

¶ *Ep.* 111. § 1; *Con. Cresc.* l. 3. c. 42.

\*\* *Ep.* 88. § 6; *Con. Cresc.* l. 3. c. 48.

†† *Ep.* 185. c. 4.

quired him to kill him, on threat of his own death if he refused.\* But those who bore the word for this schism, wielded the weapons of their warfare in no such effectual manner. It is not a little curious in the many debates carried on either in writing or by word of mouth between Augustine and some of the Donatist bishops or theologians, some of them by the way evidently sincere and earnest men, to note the rapidity with which he turns their position, and puts himself almost at once within the lines of their defences. After a while they discover that thus it will inevitably be ; and the Ithacan mendicant had hardly such dread of the thews and sinews of Ulysses, and hardly so unwillingly advanced to the conflict, as do they to the calm discussion with him of the points at issue between themselves and the Catholic Church ; for to this method of settling their differences Augustine continually invites them, while they avoid it by any subterfuges they may.†

But it was not entirely so with the Manichæans. They were not altogether such weaklings in his hands ; in them he encountered adversaries, not indeed intellectually his equals ; for where could he have met such ? yet crafty, dexterous, and eloquent, by no means unpractised in the logical fence, and wielding the weapons of a destructive criticism with a skill, which it is impossible not sometimes to admire. And otherwise, also, the contest was a more serious one. He had not against them to vindicate a few

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\* *Ep.* 185. c. 4 ; for other outrages see *Ep.* 132, § 2.

† *Ep.* 34. c. 6.

passages of Scripture from perverse and partial interpretation, but to defend and to secure the very foundations of the faith, which they assailed, and which their success would have utterly overthrown. The question at issue was not here how this or that Scripture should be understood, and whether it could only be rightly understood, when controlled and tempered by other passages; but whether there was a Scripture at all, or at least such a Scripture as men might securely commit themselves to, the very Word of God, containing all truth in it, and nothing but the truth; and if so, whether those writings which were in the keeping of the Catholic Church, and which she could show to have been in her keeping in an unbroken succession from the times of the apostles were indeed this Book—which when *they* denied on internal grounds drawn from the writings themselves, he had to trace the perfect harmony existing between the different portions of this Book; that one part, the New Testament, did not, as they said, go counter to and thus condemn another, that is, the Old; that the several portions of the New were not repugnant to one another, and did not thus (since in that case it could only be partially true) leave each man at liberty to select for himself those parts of it which he was willing to receive and believe.

The Manichæans could not but feel that if the controversy between them and the Church Catholic, as to what was the genuine doctrine which Christ had delivered, was to be decided by an appeal to the canonical Scriptures, the decision must inevitably be given against them, and in



favour of the Church. There remained therefore nothing for them but either entirely to refuse to accept this appeal, as they did in regard of the Old Testament, or where such absolute refusal would have at once put them out of court, and left them without even a nominal profession of the Christian faith, to seek to weaken as far as they might the authority of this judge, and so to take away from the force of his decision. They began, as is ever the case with those who would be quit of the Bible, with an assault upon the Old Testament; and from the authority of this they sought to release themselves altogether. It was from the vantage ground of the New that they made their assault upon it, maintaining that it was full of statements irreconcilable with the doctrines delivered there. Adimantus, an immediate scholar of Mani, wrote a book full of these so-called "contradictions," of which it may be instructive to adduce a few. Thus the beginning of Genesis, in which it is said that "God created the heaven and the earth," was contrary to the opening of St. John, where it is declared that the world was made by Christ.\* The words of Genesis that "God rested on the seventh day," were contrary to those of the Lord, "My Father worketh hitherto." (John v. 17.)† The declaration in Genesis, "It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make an help meet for him," contradicts the blessing which the Lord pronounced on every one who should leave (among other things) wife for his sake. (Matt. xix. 29.)‡ That

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\* *Con. Adimant. Man.* c. 1.      † *Ibid.* c. 2.      ‡ *Ibid.* c. 3.



God made man in his own image is against that word of Christ to the Pharisees, "Ye are of your father the devil." (John viii. 44.)\* God's declaration in the Old Testament that he was a jealous God, visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, was contrary to the word of Christ, "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good." (Matt. v. 45.)† All the places in the Old Testament in which God was set forth as speaking or appearing to man were convinced of falsehood by that one word of Christ's apostle: "No man hath seen God at any time;" (John i. 18;) as indeed by the Lord himself. (John v. 37.)‡ In the Old Testament certain meats were declared to be unclean; but Christ said, "There is nothing that entering into a man can defile him." (Mark vii. 15.)§

It will be observed of the greater number of these very characteristic antitheses that they are merely ridiculous, although not too ridiculous, some of them, to have done duty anew in later times. Others again rest on the *progressive* character of Revelation, on the circumstance that it was a *gradual* education of men into the knowledge of God, in which they moved up from and through the more elementary and imperfect into the higher and more perfect, as they were able to bear it—a consideration which will have to be recognized and urged by theologians much more freely and largely than it now is, if they would not find themselves sometimes,

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\* *Con. Adimant. Man.* c. 5.    † *Ibid.* c. 7.    ‡ *Ibid.* c. 9.

§ *Ibid.* c. 15.

when engaged with the adversaries of Revealed Truth, in all the grievous embarrassments which a false position may entail. This of the gradual training of men into the knowledge of the truth, and the consequent use and fitness at one stage of the teaching, of helps which were laid aside and would have been inapplicable, where not injurious, at a later,\* was a matter of which Augustine had a very firm grasp, and on which he often expresses himself with remarkable clearness and force†—for all which he may have been in part indebted to these very gainsayers themselves.‡ With the setting forth of this principle of the

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\* He has many illustrations drawn from our daily life. Thus *Enarr. in Ps. Lxxiii. 1*: Tu ipse dedisti filio tuo, et nuces parvulo, et codicem grandi. *De Verâ Rel. c. 17*: Quis perturbatur si unus medicus alia per ministros suos imbecillioribus, alia per se ipsum valentioribus præcipiat ad reparandam vel obtinendam salutem?

† *Conf. l. 3. c. 7*: Tanquam si in uno die indicto a pomeridianis horis justitio, quisquam stomachetur non sibi concedi quid venale proponere, quia mane concessum est: aut in unâ domo videat aliquid tractari manibus a quoquam servo, quod facere non sinatur qui pocula ministrat: aut aliquid post præsepia fieri, quod ante mensam prohibeatur; et indignetur, cum sit unum habitaculum et una familia, non ubique atque omnibus idem tribui. Sic sunt isti qui indignantur, cum audierint illo sæculo licuisse justis aliquid, quod isto non licet justis; et quia illis aliud præcepit Deus, istis aliud pro temporalibus causis, cum eidem justitiæ utrique servierint: cum in uno homine et in uno die et in unis ædibus videant aliud alii membro congruere, et aliud jamdudum licuisse, post horam non licere: quiddam in illo angulo permitti aut juberi quod in isto juste vetetur et vindicetur. Numquid justitia varia est et mutabilis? Sed tempora quibus præsidet, non pariter eunt; tempora enim sunt. Cf. *Con. Faust. l. 22. c. 47*; *De Doctr. Christ. l. 3. c. 10*.

‡ For, as he himself says in an interesting passage on the profit

divine economy, he at once disposes of a multitude of the so-called contradictions which they had found between the earlier revelation of God and the later, as the distinction of meats, ordained in the Old dispensation, abolished in the New—the retaliation of injuries allowed in the Old, their forgiveness enjoined in the New—circumcision appointed there, forbidden here.

But they did not and could not stop here. The experience of all past controversies, and a very little consideration of the actual relation in which the Old and New Testament stand to one another, attest the certainty of the fact that they will stand or fall together. None can give up the Old, and hope to retain the New. None that attack the Old will ever pause there; they will find themselves irresistibly and necessarily carried on to assail the New. The victory which they may seem to themselves to have won over that, they will themselves feel to be nothing worth, unless they can overthrow the authority of this also; for the Old may all be established again by the aid and authority of the New, which everywhere presupposes and sets the seal of a divine character to the Old; just as much

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which comes to the Church from such gainsayings (*Serm.* 51. c. 7): Negligentius veritas quæreretur, si mendaces adversarios non haberet. And again, *Enarr. in Ps.* liv. 22: Numquid enim perfecte de Trinitate tractatum est antequam oblatrarent Ariani? numquid perfecte de poenitentibus tractatum est antequam obsisterent Novatiani? Sic non perfecte de baptismo tractatum est antequam contradicerent foris positi rebaptizatores. In reference to this fact, which all Church history confirms, he quotes often 1 Cor. xi. 19; cf. *Conf.* l. 7. c. 19; *Enarr. in Ps.* lxxvii. 31; *De Gen. Con. Man.* l. 1. c. 1.

as the Old propheties of, and contains the New enfolded up in itself,\*—that being, according to Augustine's own image, the closed hand, and this the open, but the same hand still. Feeling, then, that nothing was really won, unless they could thus overthrow the legislative and absolute authority of the New Testament no less than that of the Old,† they proceeded to effect this in the minds of the simple and the unstable, affirming that the books of canonical Scripture which the Catholic Church received were in whole or in part not the writing of them whose names they bore—either interpolated by some who would fain mingle Jewish superstition with Christian truth,‡ (and that there should be such corruption they found prophesied and announced in the parable of the tares and the wheat,§) or, as in the case of the Acts, altogether sup-

\* As in one place he says: *Vetus Testamentum est occultatio Novi, et Novum manifestatio Veteris.*

† The process of first setting the New Testament against the Old, and when this antagonism seems to have done its work, then the several parts of the New against one another, was exactly that which the German assailants of Holy Scripture in the last century pursued, who did not venture to lay profane hands on the New Testament, for long after they had renounced their faith in the Old: it is exactly that which we shall see repeated in England.

‡ *Conf.* l. 5. c. 11; *Ep.* 82. c. 2. § 6. How feeble this escape of theirs, Augustine tells us that he felt even while he was still entangled in their snares. (*De Util. Cred.* c. 3.) His acquaintance with classical literature must have made him feel how nothing worth objections against the genuineness of a passage are, drawn merely from the subjective sense of the reader, and with no wavering and uncertainty in the external evidence to back them.

§ *Con. Faust.* l. 18. c. 3, 7.

posititious;\* or else, that if theirs, yet when they wrote them they were themselves not altogether delivered from those Jewish superstitions and errors ; and therefore that in each case a test had need to be applied, whereby each portion of Scripture should be judged whether it belonged to that which was to be authoritatively received or no.† This test was of course practically, whether they could turn it into a seeming support of their dogmas, in which case it was allowed ; or whether it went plainly contrary to them, when it was rejected.

They agreed with the modern rationalists, in that they tried Holy Scripture by the subjective standard of their own likings and dislikings, accepting that which squared with their own preconceived opinions, rejecting that which did not.‡ Like them, too, they proceeded to find motives

\* *De Util. Cred.* c. 3 ; *Ep.* 237. § 2.

† Thus Faustus (*Con. Faust.* l. 32. c. 1) : Ego de Testamento Novo purissima quæque legens et meæ saluti convenientia, prætermitto quæ a vestris majoribus inducta fallaciter, et majestatem illius et gratiam decolorant. Cf. l. 33. c. 3 : Nec immerito nos ad hujusmodi Scripturas tam inconsonantes et varias, nunquam sane sine judicio ac ratione aures afferimus ; sed contemplantes omnia, et cum aliis alia conferentes, perpendimus utrum eorum quidque a Christo dici potuerit, necne.

‡ *Con. Faust.* l. 11. c. 2 ; cf. l. 22. c. 15 : Inde probas hoc illius esse, illud non esse, quia hoc pro te sonat, illud contra te. Tu es ergo regula veritatis ? quidquid contra te fuerit, non est verum ? And when they in their turn sought to adduce such portions of Scripture as they did profess to receive in proof of doctrines of their own, he admirably brings out the absurdity of this (*Ibid.* l. 32. c. 16) : Ex Evangelio probatis. Ex quo Evangelio ? Quod non totum accipitis, quod

for their rejection in some contradiction or discrepancy which they professed to detect in the narrative they disallowed, making difficulties where there were none, exaggerating them where such there really were; and under cover of the discrepancies which they had discovered between Scripture and Scripture, excusing themselves from yielding credit to either. Thus they obliged Augustine to many important discussions on many matters, of which the interest can never grow old, and which have an especially lively interest at the present moment; for reading the cavils and objections of Faustus the Manichæan, one seems transported into the present age, so marvelously have they in almost all essential matters, and curiously often in minutest details,\* anticipated the destructive criticism, as brought to bear against Scripture, of the last sixty years: nor is it otherwise than encouraging to

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falsatum esse vos dicitis. Quis ergo testem suum prius ipse dicat falsitate esse corruptum, et tunc producat ad testimonium? Si enim quod vultis ei credimus, et quod non vultis ei non credimus, jam non illi sed vobis credimus.

\* Thus Faustus has anticipated the trivial objection drawn from the titles of the several Gospels, *κατὰ Ματθαῖον, κατὰ Μάρκον*, namely, that on their fronts these Gospels do not profess to be what the Church affirms them—namely, the writing of these apostles or apostolic men, but only of some who claimed to write according to accounts received severally from these four. Thus, according to his words quoted *Con. Faust.* l. 32. c. 2, the Evangelists were—*incerti nominis viri*, qui ne sibi non haberetur fides, scribentibus quæ nescirent, partim apostolorum nomina, partim eorum qui apostolos secuti viderentur, scriptorum suorum frontibus indiderunt, *asseverantes secundum eos se scripsisse quæ scripserint*.



observe that this whole battery of assault has been directed against the word of God with at least the same confidence of success, and the same boastful announcements that truth and reason were with the assailants,\* and that the Church was hopelessly clinging to the exploded and the antiquated, and this by men of a far keener dialectic skill, a far subtler intellectual power than any who have inherited their mantle,† and yet that all has been brought against it in vain. The whole fury of the assault passed away like a noise, like a flood that foams and frets for a brief season round some everlasting foundations, but presently subsides, and shows that it has been unable to displace one stone from its position.

Compelled to it by these devices of theirs, Augustine has many most interesting discussions on matters, which but for them he might have only slightly handled, if handled at all. Thus, one of the subjects on which these gainsayers forced him to express himself often and distinctly, was the authority and evidence with which the canonical books come down to later generations in the Church, as indeed the works of those whose names they

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\* *De Mon. Manich.* c. 17: Magni pollicitatores rationis atque veritatis. *Conf.* l. 3. c. 6: Dicebant veritas et veritas; et multum eam dicebant mihi, et nusquam erat in eis.

† For the chief characteristics of Faustus the Manichæan, that "great snare of the devil" (*magnus laqueus diaboli*), as Augustine calls him, a man who certainly finds not his peer among the modern assailants of Scripture, see *Conf.* l. 5. c. 3, 6, 7, 8; and at c. 13, a comparison between his eloquence and that of St. Ambrose. Cf. *Con. Faust.* l. 1. c. 1.



bear; and he very excellently shows how impossible it is to designate or even to imagine any time, when the interpolation or corruption of them could have been accomplished.\*

So, too, he treats often on the relation between various records of the same event, and the differences, which yet are never contradictions, which must exist between them.† Thus, the miracle of the healing of the centurion's servant was peculiarly unwelcome to the Manichæans, and they greatly desired to get rid of it on account of those words with which it concludes, in which the Lord gives such great honour to Jewish patriarchs, making them the foundations of that goodly company, to which indeed others should afterwards be joined. They sought to undermine the authority of the whole narrative, by urging the well-known difference between the two Evangelists, that in one the centurion appears himself as coming, in the other as sending others to be the bearers of his petition. To such unworthy objections he replies with a just indignation.‡

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\* The following are among the most important passages, *De Mor. Eccles.* c. 29; *Con. Faust.* l. 11. c. 2; l. 28. c. 2; l. 32. c. 16.

† *Diversa multa, adversa nulla esse possunt*; and *De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 66: *Ubi utrumque factum potest intelligi, nulla repugnantia est, si alius aliud, et aliud alius commemorat.*

‡ Having shown how futile their objections in this particular instance, he more generally adds (*Con. Faust.* l. 33. c. 8): *Vellem sane ut aliquis istorum vanorum, qui hujusmodi quæstiunculas quasi magnas calumniose objiciunt Evangelio, narraret aliquid idem ipse bis numero non falsum nec fallaciter, sed omnino id volens intimare et exponere, et stilo exciperentur verba ejus eique recitarentur; utrum non aliquid plus minusve diceret, aut præpostero ordine, non ver-*

Nor will he allow these slight variations to cast him into any embarrassment, nor yet to drive him to unnatural, or at best improbable, devices and combinations for the purpose of getting rid of them. That according to St. Matthew the disciples wakened their Lord in the storm with the cry, "Lord save us; we perish;" (viii. 25;) according to St. Mark, "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?" (iv. 38;) while in St. Luke, the words are "Master, master, we perish;" (viii. 24;) this does not trouble him. He readily admits that all these words *may have been* said, some by one, and some by another, disciple; but he does not require this of necessity. If the inspired narrations have truly expressed the exact meaning of the words uttered by the disciples at that moment, this is enough for him, and all that he claims from them.\* In

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borum tantum, sed etiam rerum; aut utrum non aliquid ex suâ sententia diceret, tamquam alius dixerit, quod eum dixisse non audierit, sed voluisse atque sensisse plane cognoverit; aut utrum non alicujus breviter complecteretur sententiæ veritatem, cujus rei antea quasi expressius articulos explicasset: et si quid est aliud quod fortasse possit certis regulis comprehendere, quomodo fiat ut vel in duorum singulis ejusdem rei narrationibus, vel in duabus unius ex unâ eâdemque re, multa diversa inveniantur, nulla tamen adversa; et multa varia, nulla contraria.

\* *De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 24: Nec opus est quærere quid horum potius Christo dictum sit. Sive enim aliquid horum trium dixerint, sive alia verba quæ nullus Evangelistarum commemoravit, tantumdem tamen valentia ad eandem sententiæ veritatem, quid ad rem interest? Quanquam et hoc fieri potuit, ut pluribus eum simul excitantibus, omnia hæc, aliud ab alio, dicerentur. (Cf. *Qu. in Gen.* l. 10. qu. 64.) Thus too again on the concordant diversity of the four Evangelists (c. 66): Quâ nobis ostenditur non esse mendacium,

other statements to the same effect, and in statements yet stronger than these, there is on Augustine's part a freedom and fulness in recognising the *human* element in Scripture, which has perplexed some.\* But that he himself did not in the least believe that he was thus trenching on the divine inspiration of Scripture, is manifest from innumerable passages that might be quoted, in which he claims for it immunity from all error, styles its authors "the pen of the Holy Ghost," and the like.†

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si quisquam ita diverso modo aliquid narret, ut ab ejus voluntate cui consonandum et consentiendum est, non recedat. Quod nosse et moribus utile est, propter cavenda et judicanda mendacia; et ipsi fidei, ne putemus, quasi consecratis sonis, ita muniri veritatem, tanquam Deus nobis quemadmodum ipsam rem, sic verba quæ propter illam sunt dicenda, commendet; cum potius ita res quæ dicenda est, sermonibus per quos dicenda est, præferatur, ut istos omnino quærere non deberemus, si eam sine his nosse possemus, sicut illam novit Deus, et in Ipso angeli ejus.

\* As when, accounting for the different order in which the Evangelists narrate events, and the greater fulness of one than another, he says (*De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 12): Ut enim quisque meminerat, et ut cuique cordi erat vel brevius vel prolixius eandem tamen explicare sententiam, ita eos explicasse manifestum est. See RICH. SIMON'S *Hist. Crit. du N. T.* c. 18. p. 262.

† *De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 12: Omnem falsitatem abesse ab Evangelistis decet, non solum eam quæ mentiendo promitur, sed etiam eam quæ obliviscendo. Cf. *Ep.* 19 (*ad Hier.*): Si aliquid in eis offendero litteris quod videatur contrarium veritati: nihil aliud quam mendosum esse codicem, vel interpretem non assecutum esse quod dictum est, vel me minime intellexisse non ambigam. So too *Conf.* l. 7. c. 21: Arripui venerabilem *stilum Spiritûs S. tui*, et præ cæteris apostolum Paulum, et perierunt illæ quæstiones, in quibus mihi aliquando visus est adversari sibi, et non congruere testimoniis legis et prophetarum, et apparuit mihi una facies eloquiorum castorum. Cf. *De Gen. ad Litt.* l. 5. c. 8.

## CHAPTER IV.

IN a faithful portrait the lights and shadows ought equally to find place. Such a faithful picture it is my desire here to present, and something therefore will need to be said on the excesses of Augustine's allegorical interpretations of the Old Testament. Keeping these out of sight, one might present him in an aspect more exclusively favourable as an expositor, but certainly not in such a true one. He never indeed pushes this scheme of interpretation so far as to cast any slight, which Origen, as is well known, did, on the historic letter of the earlier Instrument. He may believe and affirm of some portions of it that they borrow all, or nearly all, their worth from the higher spiritual truth of which they are the vehicle; but he never teaches or implies that anything which is there told as history, was indeed no history, had no objective reality, and was only the clothing of some moral or spiritual truth. On the contrary, he witnesses often and earnestly against all extenuations of the historic letter of Scripture; which must needs stand firm, whatever superstructure may afterwards be built thereon; this latter is ever to be reared on the establishment of the literal sense,

not upon its ruins.\* His allegory is always with a salvâ rerum gestarum fide, often expressed, always understood.†

Of course it can be only with this system driven into excess, and further than the hints which Scripture itself supplies for its due limitation will warrant, that any fault can be found. That there is in all Scripture, and naturally most of all in the Old Testament Scripture, an allegorical element which has a right to claim recognition from the Christian interpreter, few, if any, would deny. Indeed there are large portions of God's Word, as the description of Ezekiel's temple, (c. 40—48,) as the Song of Songs, which only come to their due rights when regarded from this

\* *Serm.* 2. c. 6: Ante omnia, fratres, hoc in nomine Domini et admonemus quantum possumus, et præcipimus, ut quando auditis exponi sacramentum Scripturæ narrantis quæ gesta sunt, prius illud quod lectum est credater sic gestum quomodo lectum est; ne, subtracto fundamento rei gestæ, quasi in aëre quæratís ædificare.

† On this matter he has an important chapter in the *De Civ. Dei*, l. 13. c. 21: he is speaking of the paradise of Gen. i.—iii., to which the allegorists denied any historic reality. Probably he has ORIGEN, (*De Princip.* l. 4. c. 16,) especially in his eye: Nonnulli totum illum Paradisum ubi primi homines S. Scripturæ veritate fuisse narrantur, ad intelligibilia referunt, arboresque illas et ligna fructifera in virtutes vitæ moresque convertunt; tanquam visibilia et corporalia illa non fuerint, sed intelligibilium significandorum causâ eo modo dicta vel scripta sint. Quasi propterea non potuerit esse Paradisus corporalis, quia potest etiam spiritalis intelligi: tanquam ideo non fuerint duæ mulieres, Agar et Sara, et ex illis duo filii Abrahæ, unus de ancillâ, unus de liberâ, quia duo Testamenta in eis figurata dicit apostolus; aut ideo de nullâ petrâ, Moyse percutiente, aqua defluerit, quia potest illic figuratâ significatione etiam Christus intelligi, eodem apostolo dicente, Petra autem erat Christus. Cf. *De Gen. ad Litt.* l. 8. c. 4, 7.

point of view, and which, regarded from any other, must inevitably receive an unworthy explanation. And as the thing is recognized in Scripture, so also the word by which it is usually designated. (Gal. iv. 24.) The allegory is that which ἄλλο ἁγορεύει: in it the words signify something more, in general something deeper and higher, than that which they bear upon the surface;\* they look beyond themselves into altogether another sphere of thought and feeling, and need to be translated into that, before they attain to their due rights, and exhaust the intention with which they were spoken.

The extent, indeed, to which the Old Testament is in this sense prefigurative of the New, and exactly how far its personages are prophetic, its institutions typical, and its actions allegorical, is a matter very hard satisfactorily to determine.† I believe it can only be approximatively determined, and that, after all rules have been laid down, much must be left to the tact and religious instinct of the interpreter. We indeed feel entirely confident that the

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\* In the allegory, as he himself explains it (*De Doctr. Christ.* l. 3. c. 37): Aliud dicitur, ut aliud intelligatur.

† On the extent of this the *real*, as distinguished from the *verbal*, prophecy of the Old Testament, Augustine expresses himself often. Thus *Serm.* 2. c. 6: Tales ergo illos viros habebat Deus, et illo tempore tales fecerat præcones Filio venturo, ut non solum in his quæ dicebant, sed etiam in his quæ faciebant, vel in his quæ illis accidebant, Christus quæretur, Christus inveniatur. *Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 24: Hoc primum dico, illorum hominum non tantum linguam, verum etiam vitam fuisse propheticam, totumque illud regnum gentis Hebræorum, magnum quendam, quia et Magni cujusdam, fuisse prophetam. Cf. *De Div. Quæst.* qu. 58. § 2.



comparatively few types and prophecies which in as many words are claimed by the Lord or by his apostles in the New Testament, the brazen serpent, the manna, the Paschal lamb, Jacob's ladder, Agar and Sarah, Melchisedek, the High Priest entering into the holiest, and such other as they may expressly declare to have been such, do not at all exhaust the typical element therein, but should rather serve as examples of that which is true to a much greater extent; the earlier history being throughout full of stirrings of that divine life which ultimately culminated in Christ, outline sketches which should only be filled up at a later day,\* witnesses of all kinds laid deep in that earlier economy that one God was the author of it and of the later. It is only when we come to consider how far we may proceed in this direction, and where we ought to stop, that perplexities commence.

Better indeed, far better to find Christ everywhere in the Old Testament than nowhere: and to address ourselves to the prophetic books in any other expectation than that of everywhere finding Him, or to expect that under any other conditions they will render up to us their secret, is to cast wilfully away "the key of knowledge," and yet to expect that the door will be opened to us.†

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\* On the partial fulfilment of prophecies in personages of the Old Testament, with the exhaustive fulfilment which was yet reserved for Christ, Augustine has some good observations, speaking of Solomon and the prophecies that went before in regard of him, *De Civ. Dei*, l. 17. c. 8.

† With a beautiful application of the miracle of the turning of the



But with the historic books it is otherwise. Even granting that the events recorded in them only found place for the sake of those higher ulterior meanings, of which the lower and actual were an allegory; granting that they were all a great acted parable and nothing more; yet to make every part of this parable significant is to forget the primary laws of parabolic interpretation,—that there are parts in the parable that exist merely for the sake of holding the other and more important parts of it in connexion, as there must be passages in the most splendid and best arranged house, as there is the handle in the knife which is not for cutting, much in the lyre which is not for yielding sound. Nor does this escape Augustine; he very often himself places this much of limit on the seeking for a secondary, and as he would count it, a higher meaning in all parts of the Old Testament; he allows that such connecting parts must be looked for there, and that it would be idle to seek this higher meaning in them.\* And some-

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water into wine, Augustine on this matter exclaims (*In Ev. Joh. Tract. 9*): *Tollitur insipientia cum transieris ad Dominum; et quod aqua erat, vinum tibi fit. Lege libros omnes propheticos; non intellecto Christo, quid tam insipidum et fatuum invenies? Intellige ibi Christum, non solum sapit quod legis, sed etiam inebriat.*

\* *Con. Faust. l. 22. c. 94*: *Christum igitur sonant hæc omnia; . . . nec esse quidquam credendum est librorum prophetiarum contextione narratum, quod non significet aliquid futurorum; nisi quæ ideo posita sunt ut ex eis quodam modo religantur ea, quæ illum Regem populumque ejus, sive propriis sive figuratis locutionibus rebusve prænuntient. Sicut enim in citharis et hujusmodi organis musicis, non quidem omnia quæ tanguntur canorum aliquid resonant, sed tantum chordæ; cætera tamen in toto citharæ corpore ideo*

times he makes a stand in a still more advanced position against the allegorists, altogether refusing to go along with them in their extremes,\* and recognizing the literal interpreter as worthy by comparison of superior honour.† But at other times, for there is a certain wavering and uncer-

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fabricata sunt, ut esset ubi vincirentur, unde et quo tenderentur illæ, quæ ad cantilenæ suavitatem modulaturus et percussurus est artifex; ita in his propheticis narrationibus quæ de rebus gestis hominum prophetico spiritu deliguntur, aut aliquid jam sonant significatione futurorum; aut si nihil tale significant, ad hoc interponuntur, ut sit unde illa significantia tanquam sonantia connectantur. Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 16. c. 2.

\* The following is a passage in which he thus expresses himself with greater moderation (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 17. c. 3): Quibusdam visum est, nihil esse in eisdem libris vel prænuntiatum et effectum, vel effectum quamvis non prænuntiatum, quod non insinuat aliquid ad supernam Civitatem Dei ejusque filios in hâc vitâ peregrinos figuratâ significatione referendum. . . . Mihi autem sicut multum videntur errare qui nullas res gestas in eo genere litterarum aliquid aliud præter id quod eo modo gestæ sunt significare arbitrantur; ita multum audere qui prorsus ibi omnia significationibus allegoricis involuta esse contendunt. . . . Hoc enim existimo, non tamen culpans eos, qui potuerint illic de quâcunque re gestâ sensum spiritualis intelligentiæ exsculpere, servatâ primitus duntaxat historiæ veritate.

† *De Gen. con. Manich.* l. 2. c. 2: Sane quisquis voluerit omnia quæ dicta sunt, secundum litteram accipere, id est non aliter intelligere quam littera sonat, et potuerit evitare blasphemias, et omnia congruentia fidei catholicæ prædicare, non solum ei non est invidendum, sed præcipuus multumque laudabilis intellectus habendus est. Si autem nullus exitus datur ut pie et digne Deo quæ scripta sunt intelligantur, nisi figurate atque in ænigmatis proposita ista credamus, habentes auctoritatem apostolicam, a quibus tam multa de libris Veteris Testamenti solvuntur ænigmata, modum quem intendimus teneamus, adjuvante Illo qui nos petere quærere pulsare adhortatur.

tainty about the way in which he expresses himself in this matter, he himself seems prepared to go all lengths with them, to make the entire Old Testament history, not in its great massive outline and plan, but in all its details, prophetic,\* to see nothing there simply for its own sake, to account as though it were unworthy of the Holy Ghost to have occupied Himself in the record of such matters as fill up very many pages there, unless this second and New Testament meaning could be shown everywhere to underlie the plainer and more obvious.†

The result is oftentimes that in seeking to get more out

\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxxxvi. 3*: Diximus omnia quæ secundum litteram in illâ Civitate contingebant figuras nostras fuisse. Cf. *De Catech. Rud.* § 6.

† This seems to me to speak out in such words as the following (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 17. c. 1): Ipsa Scriptura, quæ per ordinem reges eorumque facta et eventa digerens, videtur tanquam historicâ diligentia rebus gestis occupata esse narrandis, si adjuvante Dei Spiritu considerata tractetur, vel magis vel certe non minus præuuntiandis futuris, quam præteritis enuntiandis inuenietur intenta. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. cxiii. 1*. Thus too after a rapid and masterly oversight of the whole Jewish history, with a tracing of the Christian element which he everywhere found therein, a sketch occupying a great part of his twelfth book against Faustus, he sums up all in such language as this (c. 37): Hæc omnia figuræ nostræ fuerunt. [1 Cor. x. 11.] Nam si Ismael et Isaac homines nati, duo Testamenta significant, quid credendum est de tot factis, quæ nullo naturali usu, nullâ negotii necessitate facta sunt? nihilne significant? Si quis nostrum qui Hebræas litteras ignoramus, videret eas in pariete conscriptas, honorato aliquo loco, quis esset tam excors, ut eo modo pictum parietem putaret? an non potius intelligeret scriptum, ut si legere non valeret, non tamen illos apices aliquid significare dubitaret? At the same time he is obliged to acknowledge that in the Jewish history, so

of Scripture than it was intended to yield, less is indeed gotten. A shadow is snatched at, which is not reached, but in the snatching at it a substance has been lost. We may illustrate this from Augustine's own exposition of the 103rd psalm, (according to our reckoning the 104th.) Instead of that fresh healthy feeling which would read in this psalm a setting forth of the glories of God in creation, with a drawing of strength and encouragement for the faithful from a contemplation of these, he will not be content, unless he has allegorized it throughout. The sun that "knoweth his going down" (ver. 19) is the "Sun of righteousness" that *knew* of his own death, and, (with an urging of the *agnovit* of the Latin,) was well pleased to lay down his life. The beasts that "get them away together" and hide in their dens at the rising of this sun, are the persecutors in heart, who yet do not dare to show themselves openly as such in the bright day of the Church's prosperity; and so on.\* It may be said that

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far at least as relates to the history of the kings, the typical character after Solomon's time almost altogether disappears. (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 17. c. 21.

\* *Enarr. in Ps. ciii.* Thus too on the words of the Psalmist, "I laid me down and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me," (*Ps. iii. 5.*) he asks (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 17. c. 18): An forte quisquam ita desipit, ut credat velut aliquid magnum nobis indicare voluisse prophetam, quod dormierit et exsurrexerit, nisi somnus iste mors esset, et evigilatio resurrectio, quam de Christo sic oportuit prophetari? But why not? for entirely granting that these words look on to our Lord's resurrection, yet is not the wondrous mystery of our sleeping and waking, and the mercies which evermore attend it, one well worthy of being ascribed to God? might it not, without that higher meaning, have found its place in a psalm?

here is no slight on the historic facts of the Old Testament; and this is perfectly true; but there is one on God's revelation of Himself in nature, as though that had no glory of its own, which a sweet and inspired singer in his Church might fitly occupy himself in proclaiming. Scripture indeed is not mainly idyllic but epic; its theme and argument is not nature but man; yet as all worthy forms of human composition find their prototypes or their consummation therein, so even the idyl will not be wholly wanting there.\*

And the historic element in the Old Testament oftentimes does not fare better. It is never, as I have observed, in the least denied; but something else is everywhere superinduced upon it, as though without this it would not have worth and significance enough to justify the place which it occupies in the Scriptures of God. Thus the Ark is pitched within and without (Gen. vi. 14) in sign that the Church shall be so joined and knit together, that neither heresies nor scandals from within, nor open assaults from without, shall dissolve its framework, or make it pervious to the waters of the world.† Jacob's deception of his father, with all the profound lessons to be drawn from the conduct and after fortunes of the four principal actors in that transaction, none of them without fault, and none

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\* How deficient an eye for this is indicated in such interpretations as Hilary's, when he makes "the lilies of the field," which we are bidden to "consider," (Matt. vi. 28,) not to be lilies, but angels. (*Comm. in Matt. in loc.*) Augustine protests against this.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 12. c. 14.

without punishment, is passed slightly over, while Augustine hunts after a higher mystical meaning in the transaction, to which he unsuccessfully adjusts it.\* Surely there was meaning enough in it already; and surely the divine character of the family and of the nation, and of all those human relationships which spring out of these, abundantly justify a teaching, which in minutest detail and a thousand shapes should show us what is the blessing of maintaining God's order here, what the curse which attends its violation. An Holy Scripture does not demean itself, nor exhaust itself on matters alien to its very highest purpose, when it largely occupies itself herein.

I am unwilling to leave this subject without a few general observations in conclusion. The system of allegorical and mystical interpretations is one manifesting itself in too many quarters, and finding evidently far too much favour with hearers and readers to be referred to the caprice and to the idiosyncrasies of particular teachers in the Church; even as it is absurd to trace it up to Philo or to any foreign source, and to suppose that we have accounted for it thus. We do it, its authors and favourers, most right;—not when we seek to defend it in the full extent to which it was carried, because we find it allowed or zealously furthered by men to whom the Church owes so incalculable a debt;—but rather when we seek to explain it, and how it should have cast its roots so widely, and grown up to such an height. It was then, as I believe, not merely the excusable, but the inevitable, consequence of

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\* *Serm.* 4. c. 11—33.



that great wrench and shock whereby the Church forcibly detached itself from Judaism, (the writings of Justin Martyr mark the moment,) and by God's grace delivered itself for ever from the danger of merely knowing a Christ who should be the Son of Abraham, the Son of David—a shock of which the results were felt for centuries, during all which the controversies in which the Church was involved, yet further led it to an exclusive, or at least predominant, contemplation of the divine nature and person of its Lord. But it belongs to the limitation of human faculties and powers, that when mighty truths are mightily felt and witnessed for by men, this can only be through a partial throwing into the back ground, and present obscuring of other truths, especially of those which are the balancing counterweight to these. And thus it came to pass that when the Church passed over to, and rooted itself in a Gentile soil, and became virtually a Church of the Gentiles, having just fulfilled its great protest against Ebionitism and all forms of Judaizing error, there was a difficulty on the part of the protesters in recognizing in its full worth this early and preparatory history of the kingdom of God—in other words, the whole Jewish history and institutions, as the periphery of a circle whereof Christ was the centre, as the womb in which the Christ after the flesh had been gradually forming and taking shape\* and coming to the birth. We see this difficulty

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\* Augustine himself expresses this truth, though in words somewhat obscure (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 17. c. 11): *Ipse Jesus intelligitur, substantia populi ejus, ex quo natura est carnis ejus.*



of recognizing the worth of the preparatory history in its extremest excess and caricature in all the various forms of Gnostic heresy, all which had this in common, that they brought down their Christ direct from heaven, and would know of no human preparation for his appearing, no earthly root and stalk out of which He as the perfect flower unfolded at the last: and as a consequence of this they all took up a position of fanatical hostility to the Old Testament.

And even of those who were within the Church, and entirely remote from such blasphemous exaggerations as theirs, who would have been shocked at and resisted, and who did resist them to the uttermost, there were not wanting some who drove this tendency into positive error. Origen at once suggests himself as the most notable example. It is plain, however, that in these his endeavours to take the veil from off Moses' face, for so he calls it, or at least in his excesses in this direction, he found opposition even in his own day;\* for he complains himself that when he, like Isaac, has opened the wells of spiritual understanding, others come like the Philistines and stop them again.† In this resistance which he everywhere encountered, we have a remarkable example of the divine leading of the Church. Those very writers who resisted

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\* See HUET, *Origeniana*, l. 2. qu. 13; DE LA RUE, *Preface* to the second volume of his works.

† *In Gen. Hom.* 13. § 3. The position of these "friends of the letter" is plain from his own account of them. They resisted him on the right ground, *veritatem negantes stare posse nisi super terram*.

him were themselves, I believe, giving too wide a range to this system of allegorical interpretation; it was to them unduly dear: yet so soon as he or any other did thus absolutely put in peril the truth of God, and threaten seriously to impugn the historic basis on which the truth rested, and on which alone it could rest,\* so soon as ever he overpassed the limits within which this tendency was safe,—the comparatively harmless, if not always the edifying, play of the fancy,—they at once and earnestly protested against it, saw with all clearness and distinctness the importance of setting determined limits to it which it should not be allowed to overpass.

Still with all this, it was only the excesses and perilous extravagances of this system to which for the most part they opposed themselves; so long as these were avoided, they felt no misgiving about it, and the system of capricious allegorical interpretation continued in full force, and abode in highest honour during all the middle ages, with indeed the same protests on the part of the great teachers of those ages, when it seemed to threaten vital truth, as we find in the earlier Church;† nor was it till

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\* In proof that Origen does so see the remarkable passage, *De Princip.* l. 4. c. 15; one of many that might be referred to.

† Thus the great mediæval scholar of Augustine, Hugh of St. Victor, treading in his master's footsteps (*Erud. Didasc.* l. 6. c. 3): *Sicut vides, quod omnis ædificatio fundamento carens, stabilis esse non potest, sic est etiam in doctrinâ. Fundamentum autem et principium doctrinæ sacræ historia est, de quâ, quasi mel de favo, veritas allegoriæ exprimitur. Ædificaturus ergo primum fundamentum historiæ pone; deinde per significationem typicam in arcem fidei fabricam mentis*

the Reformation, and its assertion of the dignity of the family and the nation against the Papacy, which made war upon them both, that the letter of the Old Testament, with its record of an elect family and chosen nation, came to its full rights and honour, that men saw all which was contained for them therein. Doubtless it was in Luther his reverence for the great fundamental institutes of family and national life, for the relations of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, kings and subjects, his sense that a record which told simply about these as seen in the light of God, must be of the highest value, with a feeling that all this was called in question by the eagerness to find another and deeper meaning in such portions of Scripture as were occupied mainly about these, which moved him to such exceeding and oftentimes extravagantly expressed indignation against the allegorizers of the early Church;—even as his great work on Genesis, upon which he laboured with a peculiar care and love,

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erige; ad extremum ergo per moralitatis gratiam quasi pulcherrimo superducto colore ædificium pingit. At the same time such language as the following is a curious proof of the upper hand which the allegorical interpretation had acquired, even in the minds of those who felt themselves most bound to vindicate the worth also of the historic letter, when they could give in so far to the allegorists as even in the very act of protesting against their excesses, to use such humble apologies for the letter of Scripture as the following (*Prænott. Elucid.* c. 5): Quasi lutum tibi videtur totum hoc quod verbum Dei foris habet, et ideo forte pedibus conculcas quia lutum est, et contemnis quod corporaliter et visibiliter gestum littera narrat. Sed audi: luto isto quod pedibus tuis conculcatur, cæci oculus ad videndum illuminatur.

and which employed him during eight years of his life, is a glorious monument of the simpler historic interpretation. Augustine indeed had too many other titles to his respect and reverence for him ever to speak slightly of him ; yet in this matter, if others are counted blameworthy, he cannot be altogether acquitted of a share in the blame.

## CHAPTER V.

WHAT has been thus far said in regard of Augustine's fitnesses for being an able expositor of the Word of God, in regard too of the spirit in which he approached the work, I shall now endeavour to illustrate by a series of examples selected from his writings. Here indeed one is solicited by an abundance, which, if it does not make poor, yet casts into a continual perplexity as to what to choose; for certainly there was never an untruer charge than that which Père Simon brings against the exegetical writings of Augustine—namely, that one must read a great deal in them to come on anything which is good: a charge which, were it true, would include almost every other in itself; but which is so far from being so, that he who made it did in fact pronounce sentence against himself, declaring his own incapacity to recognise Christian depth and Christian experience, even when they were presented to him.\*

I shall draw my materials not merely from those writings avowedly dedicated to the exposition of Scripture,

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\* Yet this is little compared with Rosenmüller's judgment (*Hist. Interp. Lib. Sac.* v. 3. p. 502): *Nobis quidem sine omni suo merito consecutus esse videtur eam nominis celebritatem et auctoritatem quâ per omnia deinceps secula floruit.*

but indifferently from all. For it is a consequence of the immense digressions in which Augustine freely allows himself, that oftentimes the secondary gains from his exposition are larger than the primary. Thus he is expounding a psalm, and we suddenly find him explaining a parable, or unfolding at large a miracle of our Lord's—eagerly following the game which starts up before him on his path. These sometimes untimely digressions, as keeping too long and unduly out of sight the subject which he professes to be handling, and generally as affecting the *form* of his exposition, must be considered as in some sort a blemish, and in their degree to detract from its value; yet may they on another side be contemplated as a portion of his wealth, of that inexhaustible fulness which on all occasions is seeking to pour itself forth,—so that we should be ill content to have them away.

And first, we may consider his skill in the reconciliation of Scriptures; I mean not merely the removal of apparent discrepancies between one historic fact and another recorded there, such discrepancies as lie on the surface of the several narrations, but of those seeming oppositions, ethical or doctrinal, which lie much deeper, and can only be reconciled in an higher unity wherein the differences are atoned. Let serve as an example of his skill herein the reconciliation which he offers of all the parts of St. Paul's conduct in regard of the Jewish ceremonial law; which law the great apostle appears sometimes himself to observe, (Acts. xxi. 23—26,) while at other times, under peril of their salvation, he forbids his converts to do so. (Gal. v.

3, 4.) There are some very interesting letters between himself and St. Jerome, in which these and similar passages, with the difficulties that beset them, are fully and most profitably discussed.\* The discussion has its rise in an offence, which Augustine had not unjustly taken at a passage in Jerome's *Commentary on the Galatians*, wherein, out of a mistaken desire to clear the character of a saint and apostle from every speck and blemish, he implies that the scene between St. Paul and St. Peter (Gal. ii. 14) was got up between them for the promoting of peace in the Church at Antioch; that the apostle of the Gentiles did not really blame the apostle of the circumcision, but that each performed a part in a transaction arranged beforehand—St. Peter, who had indeed done well in preserving the peace of the Church, having by his withdrawal satisfied the Jewish converts, and St. Paul by his blame of him having vindicated the liberty in Christ, which else that withdrawal might have perilled.† Augustine, too straightforward a lover of the truth to endure *economies* of this kind, protests with a righteous earnestness against this explanation, which he asks Jerome to defend or to retract.‡ The latter defends his position, and with the

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\* Augustine's are the 28th, 40th, and 82nd; Jerome's, the 68th, 72nd, and 75th in the Benedictine edition of Augustine's works.

† In the same way he speaks (*Ad Philem.* 7) of the contention between Paul and Barnabas (Acts xv. 39) as *ædificatorium Ecclesiæ jurgium*—which in a sense is most true; but it was not with this intent they strove.

‡ *Ep.* 28. c. 3, he communicates his grief; and again *Ep.* 40. c. 3, 4. In this last epistle he unhappily bids St. Jerome to sing his



following arguments—However Paul may have seemed to find fault with Peter for conforming to the prejudices of the Jewish converts, yet he could not really have done so; since, if such conformity was wrong, he too was in the same condemnation; for he also made the Jews, or rather the Judaizing Christians, to believe that he kept the law; and, in proof of this, Jerome instances his circumcising of Timothy, (Acts xvi. 3,) his shaving of his head at Cenchrea, (Acts xviii. 18,) his purifying of himself in the temple, (Acts xxi. 26,) and his general confession that to the Jews he became a Jew.\*

But Augustine will not allow this defence, and seizes rightly the true point of view out of which St. Paul acted, and shows what the rule of his conduct was—not, that is, to make the faithful who still clung to the law at all believe that he also was still a keeper of it altogether; an attempt of this kind would have made his whole life a long lie; but to prove to them that he did not, as some

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recantation (*παλινωδίαν* cane.) The latter, whom none can deny, with the fullest recognition of the Church's large obligations to him, to have been somewhat tetchy and prompt to take offence, was exceedingly hurt at this exhortation from the younger man; and his part of the correspondence is full of characteristic touches, as indeed the noble character of Augustine comes out greatly in his. There is an interesting analysis of this correspondence, bringing out the *personal* in it, which I have not thought it needful to touch on, by Möhler; (*Verm. Schrift.* v. l. p. 1—18;) in which, strikingly enough for a Romanist, he gives the entire right to Paul as against Peter, to Augustine as against Jerome.

\* Jerome (*Ep.* 75. c. 3): *Quâ igitur fronte, quâ audaciâ Paulus in altero reprehendat, quod ipse commisit?*

charged him, account those Jewish rites and customs and ceremonies as things to be abhorred, and cast off by a Christian man for sinful and sacrilegious; that he had none of that enthusiasm *against* the Law which afterwards developed itself in what we may call the ultra-Pauline sects, in Gnostics and Manichæans: but, on the contrary, saw in it shadows and outlines of those good things which had their substance in Christ. Those who had grown up in the law, those to whom it had become a second nature, were perfectly at liberty to retain it,\* provided only they did not suppose that salvation in any degree depended on the observing or non-observing of it, or thrust it as a thing of necessity upon others. He did not blame Peter for observing, nor for countenancing Jewish Christians in the observing of, those customs, but for compelling Gentiles to Judaize, and so implicitly saying that these things were necessary for salvation.† So far from blaming, he would himself willingly come under the law from time to time, in this way stopping their mouths who affirmed that he set the rites and customs of Judaism on a level with heathen superstitions and idolatries, and taught that they were to be cast off in the same spirit as

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 17.

† *Ep.* 40. c. 4: Non ideo Petrum emendavit, quod paternas traditiones observaret: quod si facere vellet, nec mendaciter nec incongrue faceret: quamvis enim jam superflua, tamen solita non nocerent; sed quoniam gentes cogebat Judaizare: quod nullo modo posset, nisi ea sic ageret, tanquam adhuc etiam post Domini adventum necessaria saluti forent: quod vehementer per apostolatum Pauli Veritas dissuasit.

were those. But so doing, he never acted a falsehood, seeking to persuade any that he was a constant observer of that law. Only by occasional compliance with its enactments he paid it honour, as that which had been, though for a temporary purpose, framed by God himself, and honoured of Him as the preparatory discipline of men, until the coming in of that which was perfect.

St. Paul had no desire that the Christian Church, so far at least as it was formed out of Jewish elements, should violently and with revolutionary haste rend itself away from that Jewish economy, in which and out of which it had grown; but that it should gently and in good time surely detach itself therefrom, as the ripe fruit from the shell which has now served its end.\* It was another thing, when it was sought to submit the heathen, who had never grown up in these practices, to them; even as it would have been another thing if men, even those originally of a Jewish stock, should, after these customs and observances had once fallen out of use, at a later period have risen up and sought under any pretext to bring them in anew. This the Church would have been bound to resist, and will do so, if ever it should display itself. That which Paul countenanced and allowed was but as it were the burying of the body of the synagogue leisurely and with due honours; this would have been the disinterring of its corpse after it had lain long in the grave.†

It seems to me that Augustine gives here the true reso-

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 32. c. 13.

† *Ep.* 82. c. 2. *Sicut defuncta corpora, necessariorum officiis*

lution of all the apparent contradictions in St. Paul's conduct, as his circumcising of Timothy, and his saying, "If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing;" (Gal. v. 2;) the solution, too, of still weightier moral perplexities; for his line of action has, doubtless, in it at first sight something perplexing to the lover of truth, to him who believes that entire truthfulness and plainness of dealing should be the marked characteristic of an eminent saint of God. For take the most difficult case of all, that in which all difficulties centre, his undertaking at his last visit to Jerusalem a Nazarite vow in the temple. (Acts xxi.) Was this with the hypocritical view of making the Jews or Jewish Christians to believe that he was a constant observer of the whole ceremonial law, nay more, one who would go beyond the letter of its requirements, and take freewill vows upon himself? Not this,\* but practically to disprove that which the Judaizers affirmed of him, for the purpose of making him hateful at Jerusalem, and of marring his work everywhere—namely, that he

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deducenda erant quodammodo ad sepulturam [vetera sacramenta,] nec simulate, sed religiose; non autem deserenda continuo, vel inimicorum obtrectationibus tanquam canum morsibus projicienda. Proinde nunc quisquis Christianorum, quamvis sit ex Judæis, similiter ea celebrare voluerit, tanquam sopitos cineres eruens, non erit pius deductor vel bajulus corporis, sed impius sepulturæ violator.

\* *Ep.* 82. c. 2: Tanquam inimicum legis, mandatorumque divinorum criminabantur; cujus falsæ criminationis invidiam congruentius devitare non posset, quam ut ea ipse celebraret, quæ damnare tanquam sacrilega putabatur: atque ita ostenderet, nec Judæos tunc ab eis tanquam a nefariis prohibendos, nec Gentiles ad ea tanquam ad necessaria compellendos. This too, he goes on to say, was the

obliged his converts from among the Jews of the dispersion to forsake Moses, that he absolutely *forbade* their longer adherence to legal ordinances ; while all, in fact, that he actually forbade was their supposing that a man was justified by these ; or laying the yoke of them on heathen converts, with an “ Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved.” Here indeed he did speak out, and proclaim that, if in this spirit they preached circumcision or practised it, Christ would profit them nothing ; they were fallen from grace. Otherwise it was a thing indifferent, which neither helped nor hindered. No doubt he desired to see even this outward mark of separation between the different members of the new family in Christ Jesus taken away ; but he was content to wait till it should fall away of itself, as he knew that, if not in the first, yet in the second or third generations of the Jewish converts it inevitably must.\*

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principle of the apostle’s dealing in the cases of Timothy and Titus ; he circumcised the first, that none might say he esteemed circumcision an execrable thing ; he would not circumcise Titus, that the liberty of the gospel might stand fast.

\* *Con. Mendac. c. 12*: Id autem quod Paulus fecit, ut quasdam observationes legitimas Judaicâ consuetudine retinendo et agendo non se inimicum Legi Prophetisque monstraret, absit ut mendaciter eum fecisse credamus. De hâc quippe re satis est ejus nota sententia, quâ fuerat constitutum, nec Judæos qui tunc in Christum credebant prohibendos esse a paternis traditionibus, nec ad eas Gentiles, cum Christiani fierent, esse cogendos ; ut illa sacramenta quæ divinitus præcepta esse constaret, non tanquam sacrilegia fugerentur ; nec tamen putarentur sic necessaria jam Novo Testamento revelato, tan-

Another slighter example of Augustine's skill in setting at one may follow. He takes the words of St. Paul, "Bear ye one another's burdens," (Gal. vi. 2,) and then the words which follow so close, "Every man shall bear his own burden," (ver. 5,) which at first sight seem to contradict one another, though they are separated by but two or three verses one from the other, and he shows excellently well their reconciliation to lie in the twofold use of the word "burden." The "burden" of one another's infirmities, the "burden" even of one another's sins, in so far as they will be the cause to us of annoyance, of pain, and of labour, we can and we ought to bear for one another; even while there is another "burden," the solemn answer of each man for his own life to God, which every one must bear for himself, and which none can bear for a brother.\*

Once more; on the words of St. Paul, "We must all

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quam sine illis quicunque converterentur ad Deum salvi esse non possent. Hoc error quorundam putabat, hoc timor Petri simulabat, hoc libertas Pauli redarguebat.

\* *De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 30: Alia sunt onera portandæ infirmitatis, alia reddendæ rationis Deo de actibus nostris; illa cum fratribus sustentanda communicantur, hæc propria ab uno quoque portantur. See an admirable sermon (*Serm.* 164) on these two texts, in their relation to one another; and on the first of them some beautiful observations, *Div. Quæst.* qu. 71. The seeming contradiction between the two declarations comes out more strongly in the Latin, which has *onus* in both places, as the English has "burden," than in the Greek, which in the first has *βάρος*, in the second *φορτίον*, a variation which Augustine does not seem to have used as a help to his explanation, but whereby it is abundantly justified.



appear before the judgment seat of Christ;" (2 Cor. v. 10 ;) What is this? he exclaims ; what does St. Paul say here? Has not the Lord Himself promised, that he who heareth his word and believeth on Him that sent Him shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life? (John v. 24 ;) and now the servant seems to unsay the master's word, and to bring us all before the judgment seat anew. The atonement of the statements lies in the different uses of the word "judgment," (κρίσις,) which signifies sometimes condemnation, and sometimes discrimination ; and in the second sense only it is true that we must all appear before the judgment seat—namely, that to each may be severally distributed things suitable to his condition, good to the good, evil to the evil.\* Augustine's interpretation of this passage is entirely against their doctrine, who teach that for the faithful man also there will be a judgment according to works. His faith has saved him ; however afterwards, according to the measure of his holiness, of Christ formed in him, will be the measure of his capacity for receiving the divine reward, and his place in the future kingdom.

In the first and most important of the instances just adduced, Augustine had but to set right the error of a friend : but at other times his task is to deal with the cavils of a foe. It may profit to show by two or three examples how he disposes of the objections of the Mani-

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\* *In Ev. Joh. Tract. 22*: Ut bonis bona, malis mala distribuantur.



chæans and other adversaries, who, rejecting the whole Old Testament, yet naturally made some, as they esteemed them, more peculiarly exposed and indefensible positions there, the chief points of their attack. One of these was with them, as it eminently was with the English Deists of the last century, the destruction of the Canaanites root and branch, and at the express command of God: another, such entanglings of the (comparatively) innocent in a common doom with the guilty, and making of those to suffer for the sin of these, as found place when for Achan's as yet undiscovered sin not a few of the children of Israel perished in battle with their enemies. (Josh. vii. 5.)

In reply to the first of these objections, he does not betake himself to any of those poor evasions, which some in conflict with modern Deism have sought out,—as for instance, that the land of Canaan had originally belonged to the children of Israel, that is, through its occupancy by the patriarchs, and that in fact, under Joshua, they did but reclaim and recover their own; but he sees in the excision of those guilty nations an act of the divine righteousness, which they only will misunderstand, but which they will certainly misunderstand, who are ignorant of what sin is, and what sin deserves.\* The Canaanites were the “carcase,” and it is the everlasting law of God's

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\* *Quæst. in Jos.* qu. 16: Qui propter hoc Veteris Testamenti verum Deum fuisse nolunt credere, tam perverse de operibus Dei quam de peccatis hominum judicant, nescientes quid quisque pati dignus sit, et magnum putantes malum cum casura dejiciuntur, mortalesque moriuntur.

moral government, that “where the carcase is, there shall the eagles be gathered together.” It is a law as loving as it is righteous, that this “carcase” shall not for ever be permitted to taint and pollute the moral atmosphere of his world. The “eagles” that on this occasion were gathered together for the removing of it out of the way, were the children of Israel; if any of them did his appointed work in the bitterness of his spirit, with a mere lust after the possessions of those whom he destroyed, having pleasure in the sufferings which he inflicted, and leaving out of sight that he was a minister and executor of the righteousness of God, this was his sin; he was indeed a robber and a murderer; but nothing of this lay in his commission; nay, he contradicted his mission, so far as he allowed himself in any such evil passions as these.\*

In what manner Augustine disposed of the other cavil, his words quoted below will sufficiently declare.†

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\* *Con. Adimant. Man. c. 17*: Displicet istis miseris quod Deus populo suo interficiendos tradidit inimicos. . . . Intelligant sine odio esse posse vindictam, quam pauci intelligunt; et tamen quamdiu non intelligitur, tamdiu necesse est ut lector in libris utriusque Testamenti magno labore aut errore jactetur, et putet contrarias sibi esse Scripturas.

† *Quæst. in Jos. qu. 8*: Non enim aliquid dirum, quantum attinet ad universi mundi administrationem, contingit mortalibus, cum moriuntur quandoque morituri: et tamen apud eos qui talia metuunt, disciplina sancitur, ut non se solum quisque curet in populo, sed invicem sibi adhibeant diligentiam, et tanquam unius corporis et unius hominis alia pro aliis sint membra sollicita. Nec tamen credendum est, etiam pœnis quæ post mortem irrogantur, alium pro alio posse damnari; sed in his tantum pœnis hanc irrogari pœnam, quæ

The blots and blemishes in the lives of the faithful were a frequent and favourite subject of malignant comment on the part of some of those adversaries, the Manichæan especially, with whom Augustine had to contend. He does not of course deny the existence of such blots, some of them very dark ones, in their lives; which being there, the Scripture is too faithful mirror not to give them back:\* while yet at the same time he does not fail to bring out that a malignant misinterpretation oftentimes accounted actions of theirs to be such, which indeed were innocent and laudable; and that even of those wherein there was manifestly a fault, many were hatefully exaggerated by these adversaries, to whom Noah was a drunkard, Moses, for the killing of the Egyptian, a murderer,† and the unhappy daughters of Lot monsters of lust

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finem fuerant habituræ, etiamsi non eo modo finirentur. Simul etiam ostenditur, quantum connexa sit in populi societate ipsa universitas, ut non in se ipsis singuli, sed et tanquam partes in toto existimentur. He carries so far his view of the merely corrective character which temporal death may often have, as to assume that Ananias and Sapphira were thus judged temporally, that they might not be condemned eternally. (*Serm.* 148.)

\* *Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 60: [Scriptura] tanquam speculi fidelis nitor, admotarum sibi personarum non solum quæ pulchra atque integra, verum etiam quæ deformia vitiosaque sint, indicat; and c. 65: Nullius accipit adulandam personam, sed et laudanda et vituperanda hominum facta vel ipsa iudicat, vel legentibus iudicanda proponit; nec solum homines ipsos vel vituperabiles vel laudabiles intimans, verum etiam quædam in vituperabilibus laudanda et in laudabilibus vituperanda non tacens.

† He sees in this energetic self-help of Moses, carnal as it was, the promise and the prophecy of the man that should afterwards

and impurity.\* But whatever the extent of the sin of any, Scripture was in no wise compromised by it, nor yet the righteousness of God, whose word and utterance that Scripture was. The Scripture recorded these sinful actions of theirs, but did not praise them; most often expressed the strongest moral disapprobation of them; or where it kept silence, this silence was itself for the better exercise of the moral sense of the reader, that applying the rules drawn from other Scriptures, and from the immutable principles of morality graven in all hearts, he might pass his own judgment on the deed, excusing or accusing; which that he should be sometimes thus invited to do was plainly far more profitable, than that he should always find judgments ready made for him in the Scriptures themselves.†

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redeem Israel, and has a striking comparison on the subject (*Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 70): Verumtamen animæ virtutis capaces ac fertiles, præmittunt sæpe vitia, quibus hoc ipsum indicant, cui virtuti sint potissimum accommodatæ, si fuerint præceptis exultæ. Sicut enim et agricolæ quam terram viderint, quamvis inutiles, tamen ingentes herbas progignere, frumentis aptam esse pronuntiant; et ubi filicem aspexerint, licet eradicandam sciant, validis vitibus habilem intelligunt, et quem montem oleastris silvescere aspexerint, oleis esse utilem culturâ accedente non dubitant, sic ille animi motus, quo Moyses peregrinum fratrem a cive improbo injuriam perpetientem, non observato ordine potestatis, inultum esse non pertulit, non virtutum fructibus inutilis erat, sed adhuc incultus vitiosa quidem sed magnæ fertilitatis signa fundebat.

\* *Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 43.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 45: Narrata ista sunt, non laudata. Quædam vero enunciato judicio Dei, quædam tacito narrari oportuit; ut quando promitur quid inde judicaverit Deus, instruatur

Nor yet, he adds, was the fact of these faults and failings, yea of these great and grievous sins, of good men inconsistent with their positions as the bearers in their time of God's promises, the witnesses for his truth. Such bearers of his word, such witnesses for his truth they were; and as such, having indeed a treasure, but having it in earthen vessels, so that it was nothing strange if the earthen vessel should sometimes appear. There was only ONE whose sin, if such the Scripture had been obliged to record, would have set that Scripture at contradiction with itself, and shaken the everlasting foundations upon which the faith of the Church reposes.\*

Again, how excellent is his reply to some of these same cavillers, whose nice ears, as it seems, were offended at the occasional plainness of speech which Scripture claims for itself in speaking of certain sins and their consequences, such plainness of speech as Moses has sometimes used; as Paul, and eminently on one occasion, (Rom. i. 26, 27,)

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nostra imperitia; quando autem tacetur, vel exerceatur peritia ut quod alibi didicimus recolamus, vel exentiatur pigritia ut quod nondum novimus, inquiramus. Cf. *Con. Mendac.* c. 14.

\* On the different ways in which we may contemplate the sins of God's saints, how we may get from them all harm, but how they were recorded for our good, he has many most useful observations, commenting on the 50th (51st, *E. V.*) psalm (*Enarr. in Ps. L. 1, 2*): Non sit delectatio minorum lapsus majorum, sed sit casus majorum tremor minorum. . . . Audiunt male audientes, et quærunt sibi patrocina peccandi. . . . Alii vero audientes salubriter, in casu fortis metiuntur infirmitatem suam. And for an interesting estimate of David's character with its one shadow, a dark and deep one indeed, but also its many brightest lights, see *Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 66.

does not shrink from employing. How well he defends this needful *παρρησία* of Scripture against the affected, or if not affected, untimely, delicacy of men, who could bear that such things should be done, but not that they should be spoken of; nay, who would have silence in regard of them kept, when by the speaking the doing might perhaps be prevented.\*

There are passages, and those of high importance, the interpretation of which Augustine was the first to set upon its right basis. Such a passage is John v. 25—29; for the right explanation of which a great debt of gratitude is owing to him. The expositors before him were driven, apparently by their antagonism to the Gnostics, who denied a resurrection of the body, and consequently spiritualized the whole passage, into the opposite extreme, understanding it throughout as if it had reference, and reference only, to the bodily resurrection at the end of the world.† They got over the difficulty of the words, “The

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\* *Con. Adv. Leg. et Proph.* l. 1. c. 24: [Cicero] cum doceret, in translatione verborum obscenitatem esse vitandam, Nolo, inquit, dici, morte Africani *castratam* esse rempublicam. Sed si hoc verbum ipse quod vitari volebat, ut vitandum ostenderet, non vitavit, et quod dici noluit, coactus est dicere, quanto magis res quæ verbo eodem recte significatur, ut ab audiente possit intelligi, suo verbo enuntiatur? Atque ut ad illud redeamus, quod iste reprehendit: si Cicero vir eloquentissimus et verborum vigilantissimus appensor et mensor, quod dici noluit, dixit, ne diceretur: quanto melius Deus magis morum quam verborum pulcritudinem quærens atque munditiam, turpe aliquid non turpiter sed minaciter dixit, ut hoc horreretur, ne illud committeretur.

† So TERTULLIAN, *De Res. Car.* c. 37.



hour is coming *and now is*," by seeing an allusion in that "now is" to such foretastes of the future resurrection as found place in the raising of Lazarus, of the daughter of Jairus, and of the widow's son. Nor did the following expositors either of the Greek or Latin Church, Chrysostom, or Jerome, or Ambrose, extricate themselves from this erroneous track. Augustine was the first who showed plainly that those who thus took the whole passage literally were as far in error, though their error was more venial, as those who had spiritualized it all; that the Lord in fact is here speaking of *two* resurrections; in ver. 25, 26, of a spiritual resurrection already present, the quickening of the spirits of as many as open their hearts to hear his voice; and then in ver. 28, 29, of that universal bodily resurrection which should be at the end of the world. Nilus, indeed, a scholar of Chrysostom's, had just indicated the right exposition,\* but it was Augustine who first set it upon a secure foundation; nor would it be easy anywhere to find a more admirable specimen of Scripture interpretation, at once popular and profound, than his vindication in more places than one, of the view which he has taken.

In regard of ver. 25, he first clears his way by showing that it is in perfect consistency with the language of Scripture in a multitude of other passages, to set forth the state of sin as one of death, and the quickening of the *spirits* of men through Christ's life-giving word as a resurrection.

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\* *Ep.* 3. 135.



He quotes in proof such obvious texts as these, Ephes. v. 14; Isai. ix. 2; Col. iii. 1; Rom. viii. 10, 11. He then proceeds to justify an exposition in this sense of the words before him, showing how admirably all fits, down to the minutest details, when this key is applied; while so much does not fit at all, or only fits badly and with much forcing, when it is attempted to explain these ver. 25, 26, of the final resurrection, or, again, ver. 28, 29, of the present spiritual quickening of souls. Christ begins, "The hour is coming," and then, lest his hearers should understand Him of a perfect future, and lay the scene of that whereof He is speaking at the end of the world, He adds "and now is"—thus by aid of the two phrases, marking at once a grace already present, though in part also future; even as He could say to his disciples during the days of his flesh and before his ascension, "Now ye are clean," (John xv. 3,) although the fulness of his quickening power did not descend till after Pentecost. He proceeds, "when the dead," that is, the spiritually dead,—and He says not "all," as when speaking of the final resurrection,—“shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.” The words “they that hear,” mark some that will hear and some that will not hear, even as it lies in men’s own will to open or to close the spiritual ear to *this* voice of the Son of God; but He would not have so spoken of that voice of his at the last, which all *must* hear, whether they will or no. Nor yet would He have said “shall live,” had He intended to express the rising at the last day at once of good and evil. Only the good

“live.” *Life* in Scripture is evermore synonymous with blessedness. When the Lord would express the fact of the rising again of the wicked, he uses quite another language.

And indeed the change of language is most marked throughout, when He is speaking, as at ver. 28, 29, He is, of the bodily resurrection of all at the end of the world. Then the hour “is coming;” it no longer “now is,” for He is declaring that which is wholly future,—“in the which all,” before it was, “when the dead,” more or fewer, but now his word is all-inclusive, “*all* that are in the graves,”—of which graves there was no mention before, —“shall hear his voice,” (“the voice of the Archangel and the trump of God,” 1 Thess. iv. 16,) “and shall come forth,” the word implying a bodily coming forth; with no mention here of all being made alive or living; with no *one* word expressing now what the portion shall be of those that hear this voice; but as this is a resurrection which embraces all mankind, the Lord divides these according as they have done good or evil into a “resurrection of life” and a “resurrection of damnation.”\*

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\* Having reached ver. 28, 29, and starting from them, he thus sums up the whole of his argument (*Serm.* 362. c. 23, 24): Superius cum dixisset, Venit hora, adjecit, et nunc est: ne illa hora præ-nuntiata putaretur, quâ in fine sæculi futura est corporum resurrection. Hic ergo quia ipsam volebat intelligi, cum dixisset, Venit hora, non adjecit, et nunc est. Item superius mortuos dixit audire vocem Filii Dei, monumentorum autem nullam commemorationem fecit, ut distinguere mortuos per mentis errorem qui resurgunt modo per fidem, ab eis mortuis quorum cadavera in monumentis sunt resurrectura in ultimo sæculi. Hic ergo, ut illa in fine speraretur

Yet recognising this as undoubtedly the only true exposition of John v. 25—29, I cannot believe that Augustine has also right when he co-ordinates, or identifies rather, these two resurrections, the spiritual and the bodily, severally with the first and second resurrection of the Apocalypse. (Rev. xx. 4—6.)\* This is part and parcel of an interpretation almost throughout beside the mark, as it seems to me, of this book of Scripture; upon the exposition of which in the after Church for many hundred years his influence was very far from favourable.† Yet one important principle in

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corporum resurrectio, Omnes, ait, qui in monumentis sunt, audient vocem ejus et procedent. Item superius, Audient, inquit, vocem Filii Dei, et qui audierint, vivent. Quid opus erat addere, Qui audierint, nisi quia de his dicebat qui secundum mentis errorem mortui sunt, quorum multi audiunt et non audiunt, id est, non obtemperant, non credunt. Hic autem ubi secundum corpora resurrecturos pronuntiat, non ait, Audient vocem ejus, et qui audierint, procedent. Omnes enim novissimam tubam audient, et procedent, quia omnes resurgemus. Superius, ubi per fidem secundum Spiritum reviviscitur, ad eandem sortem omnes reviviscunt; ut vita eorum non distribuatur in beatitudinem et miseriam, sed ad bonam partem omnes pertineant. Et ideo cum dixisset, Qui audierint, vivent; non adjecit, Qui bona egerunt, in vitam æternam, qui vero mala egerunt, in pœnam æternam. Hoc enim ipsum quod dictum est, vivent, in bono tantummodo accipi voluit. Hic autem dixit, Audient et procedent, quo verbo significavit corporalem motum corporum de locis sepulturarum suarum. Sed quia procedere de monumentis non omnibus ad bonum erit: Qui bona, inquit, fecerunt, in resurrectionem vitæ; etiam hic vitam in bono tantum intelligi voluit: qui vero mala egerunt in resurrectionem judicii, judicium scilicet pro pœnâ posuit. Cf. *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 19; and *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 6.

\* *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 6, 7.

† The great passage in which he unfolds his view of the Apocalypse is *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 7—17.

regard of this book he affirms, and one the overlooking of which brings infinite confusion into its interpretation; namely, that we are not to read it as one continuous series of events, stretching onward in unbroken succession to the consummation of all things; but rather that there are in it many new beginnings,—thus ch. xii. is such,—and often when it seems at first sight to be narrating different things, it is indeed only narrating the same in different ways.\*

Augustine was not always so successful an innovator. I shall here profit by that liberty which he, using in regard of the writings of those who went before him, desired also should be used in regard of his own,† to adduce two or three examples of what seem to me losses, more or less serious, which he inflicted on the interpretation of Scripture. Thus he did serious wrong, as I am persuaded, to the Old Testament theology and its interpretation, through his lowering to the rank of created angels, the Angel of Jehovah, who appears, and ever in

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\* *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 17: In hoc quidem libro obscure multa dicuntur, . . . maxime quia sic eadem multis modis repetit, ut alia atque alia dicere videatur; cum aliter atque aliter hæc ipsa dicere vestigetur.

† *Ep.* 148. c. 4: Neque enim quorumlibet disputationes, quamvis Catholicorum et laudatorum hominum, velut Scripturas canonicas habere debemus, ut nobis non liceat salvâ honorificentîâ quæ illis debetur hominibus, aliquid in eorum scriptis improbare atque respuere, si forte invenerimus quod aliter senserint quam Veritas habet, divino adjutorio vel ab aliis intellecta, vel a nobis. Talis ego sum in scriptis aliorum, tales volo esse intellectores meorum.

his own name, at so many great crises of the theocracy, and to whom divine titles, honour, and attributes, are continually ascribed. (Gen. xxxii. 28, 30; xlviii. 16; Exod. iii. 5; Josh. v. 14, 15; Judg. xiii. 18.)\* Not seeing in him the Son of God, the Word as yet unincarnate, he deprived these his apparitions of a great part of their significance, manifestly of all which they had as preludes and figures of the coming incarnation.†

Jansenius, and others who like him seek to glorify Augustine at the expense of all the other great doctors of the early Church, even of an Athanasius himself, (indeed one might suppose from Jansenius that he first had discovered in Scripture the doctrines of grace,) these make very much of his departure in this matter from the unanimous exegetical tradition of as many as had gone before him. They do not scruple to attribute to him the glory of having hereby given the final stroke and death-blow to Arianism; which they affirm found one of its chiefest supports, and now, when in the course of the controversy all the others had been removed from it, its only

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\* The chief passage on this subject is *De Trin.* l. 3. c. 11. Later favourers of this interpretation have added nothing to the arguments which he there adduces. Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 16. c. 29; *Con. Maxim. Arian.* l. 2. c. 26.

† *Prælua et figuræ incarnationis*: *Bull, Def. Fid. Nic.* l. 4. c. 3. § 14, who quotes the remarkable passages from Hilary, *De Trin.* l. 4. §§ 23, 42, in which the elder faith of the Church on this subject is maintained. For a full collection of passages from the early Fathers, see *Bull*, l. 1. c. 1. §§ 2—8; and *Petavius, De Trin.* l. 8. c. 2.

one, in the admission which the Church, as they say, had too hastily made, that this intermediate angel was the Word of God.\* The steps of the Arian argument, put in its barest form, were these: God is invisible; (1 Tim. i. 17;) but this angel, whom the whole Church has ever recognised as the Word not as yet incarnate, was visible: therefore this angel, that is, the Word, is not God. Many have shown, Bishop Bull perhaps the best of all, that there was no need of going back from the Church's original faith in this matter, for the purpose of avoiding such a conclusion; and the eagerness of all modern Arians to maintain Augustine's position is a clear evidence that they feel more to be gained for them than lost by such an interpretation of the passages in the Old Testament, in which the Angel of the Lord appears. Nor indeed is it with them alone that it has found favour; but with others also, from a very different, though not a worthier, theological interest: for not to speak of the Socinians, who indeed are but the Arians a little more developed, to whom it was welcome as depriving the doctrine of the Trinity of an important support, it has been favourably

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\* Thus in his *Augustinus*, JANSENIUS: Augustinus adversus constantem præcedentium sententiam magno ausu, majore conscientia subnixus scripturarum pondere, et rationum gravissimarum acumine ac texturâ primus pansi velis in libris de Trinitate demonstravit omnes apparitiones illas Veteris Testamenti, non Deo sed angelo tribuendas esse. So too Rivius (*Vita Augustini*, Antverp. 1646, p. 587): Non dubitavit ire contra totam Patrum vetustorum scholam, melioribusque auspiciis fontem hæreseos [Arianæ] occludere. Compare *Rich. Simon's Hist. Crit. du N. T.* c. 19.



received by the Romanists as well, promising to supply them with a scriptural authority for their worship of angels.

The Epistle to the Romans, the interpretation of which owes so much to Augustine, (some part of its gains from him I shall desire presently to recount,) yet is not exclusively a gainer from him. Here and there he has set the interpretation on a wrong track ; and thus I am persuaded it has been with the latter clause of chap. v. 5. The history of the exposition of the verse is curious ; to Augustine's influence we mainly owe the almost entire loss for many centuries of its true interpretation ; which Origen, Chrysostom, and Ambrose, men every one of them less penetrated with the spirit of St. Paul than he was, had yet rightly seized ; but which, by his influence and frequent use of it in another sense, was so completely lost sight of, that it was not recovered anew till the time of the Reformation. He read in his Latin, *Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris per Spiritum Sanctum, qui datus est nobis*. Had he read, as Ambrose reads it,\* and as it should have been, *effusa*,† it is probable he would have been saved from his mistake : for the comparison which would have been thus suggested with such passages as Acts ii. 17 ; Isai. xxxii. 15 ; Ezek. xxxvi. 25 ; Joel ii. 28, in all which God's large and free communication of Himself to men is set forth under the image of a stream from heaven to earth, would have led him to see that this "love of

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\* *De Spir. Sanct.* l. 1. c. 8. § 88.

† Ἐκκέχυται is the word of the original



God" which is poured out in our hearts, and is here declared to be our ground of confidence in Him, is *his love to us*, and not as Augustine will have it, our love to Him; as is plain from a comparison with ver. 8.\* The passage is of considerable dogmatic importance. The perverted interpretation became in after times one of the main stays, indeed by far the chiefest one, of the Romish theory of an *infused* righteousness being the ground of our confidence toward God: this the true explanation excludes, yet at the same time affirms this great truth, that God's justification of the sinner is not, as the Romanists say we hold it, an act merely *declaratory*, leaving the sinner as to his real state where it found him, but a *transitive* act, being not alone negatively a forgiveness of sin, but positively an imparting of the spirit of adoption, with the *sense* of reconciliation, and of all else into which God's love received and believed will unfold itself.

Of slighter importance is his departure from the hitherto received interpretation of Gen. vi. 2; although here, too, I must needs believe that he forsook, and caused others to

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\* The *caritas Dei diligentis*, not the *caritas Dei dilecti*. In several other passages where ἀγάπη Θεοῦ occurs, Θεοῦ is the genitive of the subject, not of the object. (Rom. viii. 39; 2 Cor. v. 14, and elsewhere.)—It is by no oversight that Augustine so interprets the passage. On the contrary he distinctly rejects the correcter explanation (*De Spir. et Litt.* c. 32): *Caritas Dei dicta est diffundi in cordibus nostris, non quâ nos ipse diligit, sed quâ nos facit dilectores suos: sicut justitia Dei, quâ nos justi ejus munere efficimur; et Domini salus, quâ nos salvos facit; et fides Jesu Christi, quâ nos fideles facit.*

forsake, the true explanation of the words. Most, if not all, of the Fathers who had gone before him, certainly Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, and Ambrose, had understood "the sons of God," of whom Moses speaks as angels; for "sons of God" is a standing title of the angels in the Old Testament; (Job i. 6; ii. 1; xxxviii. 7; Ps. xxix. 1; lxxxix. 7; Dan. iii. 25;) and never till under the New Testament there had come forth a Son of God, is it given to mortal men. (John i. 12.) He, however, saw in them, and was one of the first who did so, the descendants of Seth,\* and understood the inspired historian to intend by this notice to indicate a breaking down of the distinction which had hitherto been maintained between the two lines of Cain and of Seth. The question is full of difficulty, yet there is much to lead one to the conclusion that the earlier expositors were in the right, who beheld in these unions, which were the crowning wickedness of the old world, and from whence the giants sprung, something more mysterious than marriages contracted between the Cainites and the Sethites—some "spiritual wickednesses," which rendered the flood an inevitable necessity.

While we are thus marking the spots upon the sun, it may be well to indicate one or two more passages, where Augustine's usual skill seems to have failed him. Thus, quoting the words of St. John, "His head and his hairs

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\* *De Civ. Dei*, l. 15. c. 22: in the following chapter he seeks to refute at length the contrary explanation.

were white like wool, as white as snow," (Rev. i. 14,) he singularly enough sees in this *whiteness* of Christ's hair, the *hoary* head of old age; an outward expression of the inward fact, that He whom the seer beheld was "the Ancient of Days."\* This every one, I think, at once *feels* cannot have been the meaning of St. John; and a little reflection justifies the instinctive dissent from such an explanation: for the blanching of the hair being one of the signs and consequences of life receding before death, of commencing weakness and decay, it is impossible that the hair "white as snow" could in this sense have been attributed to the ever-living and ever-strong. Rather the "*white*" here is to be explained, as in all the divine apparitions in which it is mentioned,† by the fact that all brightness in its utmost excess attains to be absolutely white: iron ends with being *white* hot. The hair "white like wool, as white as snow," is here another trait of the intolerable brightness, which from head to foot was the Lord's.

Even in little details in which one might suppose his exegetical tact would certainly have shown him the right way, he sometimes misses his point. Thus, in one place, he suggests a reason why the Lord should have promised

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\* *Exp. in Gal.* 4. 21: Dominus non nisi ob antiquitatem Veritatis in Apocalypsi albo capite apparuit.

† Matt. xvii. 2; xxviii. 3; Mark ix. 3; xvi. 5; Luke ix. 29; cf. Luke xxiv. 4 with John xx. 12. The *θρόνος λευκός*, Rev. xx. 11, is = *θρόνος δόξης*, Matt. xxv. 31; the *νεφέλη λευκή*, Rev. xiv. 14 = *νεφέλη φωτεινή*, Matt. xvii. 5. And the connexion between *λευκός* and *luceo*, *nix* and *niteo*, (contracted from *niviteo*,) is undoubted.

a reward to one who should give even a cup of *cold* water to a disciple of his, (Matt. x. 42,) namely, that thus not even the poorest, not one so poor as to be unable to heat it, should be excluded from the power of showing this mercy, and inheriting this reward.\* Writing under an African sky, he should have better interpreted these words; the "*cold*" is added to imply a certain zeal on the part of the offerer of this cup, which makes him careful to offer one of real refreshment; and this only the cold water, that which therefore had been freshly drawn, would be to the weary traveller. (Prov. xxv. 25; Jer. xviii. 14.)

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxxv. 5*: Calicem aquæ *frigidaë* addidit, ne quis vel inde caussaretur, quod lignum non habuerit unde calefaceret aquam.

## CHAPTER VI.

IT would not be difficult, I think, to compose a commentary, which should be both interesting and instructive, on the whole life of John the Baptist as recorded in Scripture, drawing the materials exclusively from the writings of St. Augustine, so abundant and so excellent would those materials be found. Such here, however, I cannot attempt, but must satisfy myself with rapidly touching on a few points in his life which Augustine has dwelt on with a peculiar love, or expounded with more than ordinary success; not forbearing, at the same time, to express my sense of one or two erroneous explanations into which I am persuaded he has fallen. Indeed, that which I first would note is an inaccuracy in respect of Zacharias, the father of the Baptist, of which, indeed, he is not the author, for we find it already in St. Ambrose, even as it maintained its ground during all the middle ages—I mean the making Zacharias to have been *High Priest*, which of course he was not, but only one of the ordinary priests. This error had its root in a misapprehension of Luke i. 9, where Zacharias is described as going in to burn incense in the temple of the Lord.\* This was

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\* *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 49. § 27: Nam incensum non licebat ponere nisi summo sacerdoti. Cf. *De Perfect. Just.* c. 17; *Serm.* 291. § 3; For

understood as though it was the entrance once a year into the Holy of Holies, which being only permitted to the High Priest, he who performed this function must needs have been clothed with this office. The Evangelist alludes, in fact, to the daily burning of incense, morning and evening, which was not his exclusive prerogative, but was permitted to the ordinary priests as well.

Augustine brings out in respect of such births as the Baptist's, in which the parents are stricken in years, and according to the usual order of things have overlived the hope and expectation of children, that, however remotely, they are yet approximations to the one central Virgin birth. The relation is not merely that these as well as that are out of the usual order; it lies not in the *wonder* that belongs, though of course in very different proportions, to both; but also in the fact that in these also that which is born, is born manifestly not of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man. In these births according to promise and by the special gift of God, that disturbing element which mingles with the very foundations of our natural life as they are first laid, was not indeed altogether wanting, as in *his* birth who was virgin-born, yet has it fallen very far into the background; therefore it became well that He who should be born of a pure Virgin should have as his herald one born in virtue of a promise, and of those that, like Abraham and Sarah, had overpassed the expectation of children; and in this birth we may behold a certain

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an ample refutation of an error so patent as not to need one, see WITSIUS, *Vita Joh. Bapt.* p. 475.

approximation, however distant, to the mystery of that.\*

The distinction between John's baptism and Christ's, and the immeasurable superiority of the last over the first, Augustine everywhere asserts or assumes.† I have not any passage at hand in which he draws out *what* the essential prerogatives of the baptism of the Master, as compared with that of the servant, were.‡ He probably considered, though in this he was mistaken, that no one could confound that preparatory washing with the Christian sacrament of baptism, and that the difference was expressed with sufficient clearness in the words of the Baptist himself: "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire;" (Matt. iii. 11;) John's the baptismus *fluminis*, the Lord's not *fluminis* alone, but *flaminis* as well. The attempt to identify the

\* *Serm.* 290. c. 1: Ambo mirabiliter nati, præco et Judex, lucerna et Dies, vox et Verbum, servus et Dominus. De sterili servus, de Virgine Dominus. *Serm.* 291. § 1: Quia enim venturus erat per Virginem Deus homo, præcessit eum de sterili mirabilis homo.

† *Serm.* 210. c. 2: Baptismus Johannis a baptismo Christi discernendus est. *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 5. § 5: Qui baptizati sunt a Johanne non eis sufficit; baptizati sunt enim baptismo Christi: Augustine has probably especially in his thought the disciples of John baptized by Paul at Ephesus; (Acts xix. 1—5;) cf. *Con. Litt. Petil.* l. 2. c. 37. For the humiliating evasions by which the maintainers of the identity of the two baptisms seek to get rid of this decisive statement, see GERHARD'S *Loc. Theoll.* loc. 21. c. 4. § 63.

‡ They are best stated by Tertullian in a remarkable passage, *De Baptismo*, c. 10.



two is found for the most part in connexion with a poor and unworthy apprehension of the benefits of Christian baptism. John's baptism is not raised to a level with it, but it is reduced to a level with John's. One who, like Augustine, held that it was of the essence of a New Testament sacrament, not merely to promise, but actually to impart, grace,\* was not likely to confuse them; for this none would have affirmed of the baptism of John.

Augustine has altogether a right insight into the words of the Baptist, John i. 15; the exact meaning of which very far from all interpreters have seized. It would be long to follow them in their different deviations from the right way; which right way is, to take the words as declaring first a fact: "He that cometh after me is preferred before me;" and then the ground on which this fact reposes; "for He *was* before me;" and they only escape the appearance of containing a tautology, when we seize rightly, as Augustine has done, the distinction between the verb of time and of becoming (γενεσθαι) in the first clause of the sentence, and that of eternity and of being (ἦν) in the second. John is here declaring, first, that Christ, although coming into the world later than himself, had yet, as one might say, overtaken and passed him by, had got beyond him; so that the glory and fame of John, however it had an earlier beginning, was yet fading and waning now before the greater glory of his Lord: and then, in the second

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. lxxiii. 1*: Sacramenta Novi Testamenti dant salutem, sacramenta Veteris Testamenti promiserunt Salvatorem.

clause of the verse, he announces that this was only just and fitting, since He who thus came into the world after him, yet *was* before him, was from eternity. It was only just, then, that the Sun should extinguish the lamp—the King cause the herald to be forgotten—He whose goings forth were from everlasting should surpass in reputation and honour him who pertained only to time.\*

These relations between John and his Lord Augustine loved to find expressed in the titles, severally, of the voice, which is all that John claimed for himself; (John i. 23;) and of the Word, which is claimed for his Lord; (John i. 1;) so also in that of the lamp, burning and shining indeed, (John v. 35,) but with a derived light, and with one quenched after a season, which was John, as compared with the Light, “the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” which was Christ. (John i. 9.)†

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\* *Serm.* 380. § 5: Quomodo si duo ambulant in itinere, et unus sit tardior, alter velocior, et præcedat tardior aliquantum, post paululum autem sequatur velocior; respicit tardior præcedens velociorem sequentem, et dicit, Post me venit. Et ecce accelerante illo, et propinquante, et adhærente, et transeunte, videt ille anteriorem quem respiciebat posteriorem; certe si celeritatem ejus expavescat quodam modo et admiretur, nonne poterunt esse ista verba ejus, Ecce homo post me erat, et ante me factus est? *Ibid.*: Præcessit honore Johannem. Sed vide utrum merito. Interroga ipsum Johannem. Qui te sequebatur, quare tibi prælatus est? Sequitur, Quia prior me erat. Prior Johanne, prior Abraham, prior quam Adam, prior quam cælum et terra, prior quam Angeli, Sedes, Dominationes, Principatus, et Potestates.

† This antithesis between John as the lamp and Christ as the Light we have in great part lost in the English translation: where

This last antithesis has taken great hold upon Augustine, so that he recurs to it again and again. Nor is it only as a play in which his fancy has found pleasure; for under that which might at first sight have appeared no better than such a play of the fancy, there was expressed a truth, than which none was dearer to his heart, and one which the gainsayings of Pelagians had more and more made him to feel was a central truth of all theology — this, namely, that God is the one fountain-source of all wisdom, light, and knowledge, “the Father of lights;” while all that man has is derived; he receives light, he never creates it; if he is light, he is “light *in the Lord* :” even as the eyes at their healthiest and best have but the capacity of vision; it is only the coming of another light than their own which actually enables them to see. Thus Christ was *the* Light, the true light that lighteth every man; the chiefest, highest, holiest beside him, a John himself, was but a lamp kindled from his beams,\* but which, as it

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the words, ἐκεῖνος ἦν ὁ λύχνος ὁ καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων, have been rendered, “he was a burning and a shining *light*.” Augustine had in his translation much better, as it is also now in the Vulgate: Ille erat *lucerna* ardens et lucens. The word *lucerna* threw him and others, as Tertullian before him, back on the words of the Psalmist, Paravi lucernam Christo meo, (Ps. cxxxi. 17,) in which words they believed they saw a third distinct prophecy of John, besides the two which the Old Testament undoubtedly contains. Thus *Serm.* 293. § 4: Deus Pater in prophetiâ loquens, Paravi lucernam Christo meo, Johannem Salvatori præconem, Judici præcursorem venturo, futuro amicum Sponso.

\* On the noble humility of John, and the freedom with which he abases himself, that he may give all glory to his Lord, Augustine

was kindled, might also be quenched in darkness again.\* He remarks too, by the way, although this is a very subordinate thought with him, that it was part of God's discipline and training of men that the lamp should go before the Light. The weak and diseased eyes that could not at once have endured the brightness of this were thus trained to bear it by the feebler splendour of the other.†

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exclaims (*Serm.* 287. c. 2): *Lucerna enim erat, et vento superbiae timebat exstingui.*

\* *Serm.* 67. c. 5: *Tu tibi lumen non es. Ut multum, oculus es; lumen non es. Quid prodest patens et sanus oculus, si lumen desit? Sic et Johannes lumen putabatur. And then with reference to John v. 33: Ille lucerna, hoc est, res illuminata, accensa ut luceret. Quæ accendi potest, potest et exstingui. Cf. Serm. 341. § 2; In Ev. Joh. Tract. 14. § 1: Potest quidem dici lumen Johannes, et bene dicitur et ipse lumen; sed illuminatum, non illuminans. Aliud est enim lumen quod illuminat, et aliud lumen quod illuminatur. Nam et oculi nostri lumina dicuntur, et tamen in tenebris patent et non vident. Lumen autem illuminans a seipso lumen est, et sibi lumen est, et non indiget alio lumine ut lucere possit, sed ipso indigent cætera ut luceant. Cf. Ibid. 23. § 3, 4.*

† *Serm.* 67. c. 5: *Propter cæcos lucerna dei testimonium perhibebat*—which thought he expresses in another image elsewhere (*In Ev. Joh. Tract. 2. § 7*): *Quomodo plerumque fit ut in aliquo corpore radiato cognoscatur ortus esse sol, quem oculis videre non possumus. Quia et qui saucios habent oculos, idonei sunt videre parietem illuminatum et illustratum a sole, vel montem, vel arborem, aut aliquid hujuscemodi idonei sunt videre: et in alio illustrato demonstratur ortus ille, cui videndo adhuc minus idoneam aciem gerunt. Sic ergo illi omnes, ad quos Christus venerat minus idonei erant eum videre: radiavit Johannem, et per illum confitentem se radiatum ac se illuminatum esse, non qui radiaret et illuminaret, cognitus est ille qui illuminat, cognitus est ille qui illustrat.*

So also, as Christ was the Light and John only the lamp, Christ was the Word and John only the voice. In drawing out the relations of Jesus and John as expressed by these titles, the Word and the voice, Augustine traces with a singular subtlety the manifold and profound fitnesses which lie in them for the setting forth of those relations. A word, he observes, is something even without a voice, for a word in the heart is as truly a word as after it is outspoken ; while a voice is nothing, a mere unmeaning sound, an empty cry, unless it be also the vehicle of a word. But when they are thus united, the voice in a manner goes before the word, for the sound strikes the ear before the sense is conveyed to the mind : yet while it thus *goes* before it in this act of communication, it *is not* really before it, but the contrary. Thus, when we speak, the word in our hearts must precede the voice on our lips, which voice is yet the vehicle by which the word in us is transferred to and becomes also a word in another ; but this being accomplished, or rather in the very accomplishment of this, the voice has passed away, exists no more ; but the word which is planted now in the other's heart, as well as in ours, remains. All this Augustine transfers to the Lord and to his forerunner. John is nothing without Jesus : Jesus just what he was before without John ; however to men the knowledge of Him may have come through John. John the first in time, and yet He who *came* after most truly having *been* before him. John, so soon as he had accomplished his mission, passing away, ceasing, having no continuous significance for the Church of God,

but Jesus, of whom he had told, and to whom he witnessed, abiding for ever.\*

It must always strike one as somewhat strange, that even after the Lord had commenced his ministry, John still went forward with his; that John's baptism did not cease after Christ's had begun; (John iii. 22, 23;) that John, so far from dissolving the circle of his disciples, and handing them all over to the more perfect Teacher who now was come, not only retained those whom he had made already, (Matt. ix. 14,) but also gathered others round him. (John iv. 1.)† Augustine seems to give the

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\* *Serm.* 293. § 3: Johannes Vox ad tempus, Christus Verbum in principio æternum. Tolle verbum, quid est vox? Ubi nullus est intellectus, inanis est strepitus. Vox sine verbo aurem pulsât, cor non ædificat. Verumtamen in ipso corde nostro ædificando advertamus ordinem rerum. Si cogito quid dicam, jam verbum est in corde meo: sed loqui ad te volens, quæro quemadmodum sit etiam in corde tuo, quod jam est in meo. Hoc quærens quomodo ad te perveniat, et in corde tuo insideat verbum quod jam est in corde meo, assumo vocem, et assumtâ voce loquor tibi: sonus vocis ducit ad te intellectum verbi, et cum ad te duxit sonus vocis intellectum verbi, sonus quidem ipse pertransit, verbum autem quod ad te sonus perduxit, jam est in corde tuo, nec recessit a meo. Cf. *Serm.* 288. § 3: an admirable specimen of Augustine's skill in making the hard comparatively easy, and uniting at once the deep and the popular; and *Serm.* 289. § 3. I ought to mention that all this of the distinction between the voice and the word, and the application of the distinction to John and the Lord, is anticipated by Origen, *In Joan. tom.* 2. § 26.

† *Serm.* 292. c. 2: Hic ergo Johannes non invenitur inter discipulos Domini, sed potius invenitur discipulos habuisse cum Domino; . . . absit ut dicam, contra Dominum, sed tamen quasi extra Dominum.



true explanation of the fact ; which is, that a certain independence, a certain aloofness on his part was necessary to his function as a witness to the Lord. If his witness was to go far with his countrymen, it must be that, not of one that was merely a disciple of Jesus, and who therefore would evidently only reproduce the impressions received from Him, whose witness consequently would be in fact, and would be felt by all to be, the Lord's testimony to Himself.\* The testimony of John on the contrary, came with quite another force, being that of one who, while he did fullest and freest homage to the superior greatness of the Lord, yet retained, for so God had willed it, a position of his own. That position moreover being exactly one in which feelings of jealousy would most easily have risen in his mind at the glory which was fast eclipsing his own, feelings which there were not wanting those who attempted to stir up, (John iii. 26,) his testimony to the character and mission of the Son of God must have come to the men of his generation with a weight, which under no other circumstances it could have possessed.†

At the same time John's aloofness from Jesus reaches deeper than this, grounds itself on a fact which Augustine often urges—namely, that John was, so to speak, the impersonation of the whole preparatory discipline for men's

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\* *Serm.* 293. § 6: *Laudatis quem sequimini, prædicatis cui adhæretis.*

† *Serm.* 293. § 6: *Hoc erat procul dubio necessarium præcursori fideli, ab eo Christum prædicari qui posset æmulus credi.*



reception of a Saviour:\* that whole preparation culminated in him; "the law and the prophets were until John." Yet though standing thus at the threshold, he did not himself move in the sphere, of New-Testament and evangelical life, but in that of the Old; and thus it would have seemed like a confounding of things which it was the intention of God should be kept distinct, the law and the gospel, prophecy and its fulfilment, it would have troubled and marred the representative character of John, personifying, as he did, the first of each of these great contrasts, had he entered into closer personal relation with Him who was the end of the law, the fulfilment of prophecy.

In regard of John's message to Jesus, "Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another?" (Matt. xi. 3,) the somewhat startling character of such a message from such a man, the strange sound which it has in our ears that he who bore the first and distinctest witness to Jesus as the Christ, should now himself seem to doubt whether he were the promised One or not, Augustine well brings out;† while at the same time he keeps clear of, indeed he seems expressly to contradict, Tertullian's

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\* *De Div. Quæst.* qu. 58: Johannes Baptista multis probabilibus documentis non absurde creditur prophetiæ gestare personam. . . . Totius prophetiæ, quæ ab exordio generis humani usque ad adventum Domini de Domino facta est, imaginem gestat.

† *Serm.* 66. § 3: Illa laudatio facta est dubitatio? Tu digitum intendisti, tu eum ostendisti; tu dixisti, Ecce agnus Dei, Ecce qui tollit peccata mundi. Tu dixisti, Nos omnes de plenitudine ejus accepimus. Tu dixisti, Non sum dignus corrigiam calceamenti ejus solvere. Et modo tu dicis, Tu es qui venis, an alium expectamus?

error,\* who will have the Baptist to have sent not for his disciples' satisfaction and establishment in the faith, or at least not merely for theirs, but also for his own; as though in that dungeon of Machærus, he too had been assailed with doubts by the tempter, and now needed for himself this re-assuring word. This explanation of the message has something in it attractive at first sight, and Olshausen has done for it all of which it is capable to commend it to the Christian sense of the reader, and to remove from it what it has of strange and perplexing: yet I cannot accept it as a true view of the case, or believe that there were any shakings in the Baptist's faith. Rather in sending his disciples with this question to the Lord, he did but continue to do that which he had done from the first, namely, turn all eyes so far as he might away from himself, the waning lamp, and to Jesus, the waxing Sun. His disciples had heard *his* testimony that Jesus was the Christ, and they might have been tempted to believe this, mainly because their master said it, instead of because the Lord himself declared it—to have made even their very affiancing on the Lord itself an act of homage done to their own master, and not to Him. How few would have

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\* TERTULLIAN, *De Bapt.* c. 10; *Adv. Marcion.* l. 4. c. 18: Ipso jam Domino operanti in terram necesse erat portionem Spiritus S. quæ ex formâ prophetici moduli in Johanne egerat præparaturam viarum Dominicarum abscedere jam ab Johanne, redactam scilicet in Dominum, ut in massalem suam summam. This statement Augustine I think meant pointedly to contradict, when he explains the reason of the Lord's testimony to John (ver. 7—15,) as being, Ne fortis aliquis dicat; Bonus erat primo Johannes, et Spiritus Dei deseruit illum.

resisted the subtle flattery offered to them in such a shape as this. But John did resist it. Their faith in Christ shall rest not on their faith in him, that is, on man's word, as its ultimate ground, but rather on the word of God, on the Lord's own testimony that he is the Christ. John desired, as Augustine well expresses it, that his disciples should dig down to the rock, and set their foundations there, and would not be satisfied until they had so done; and this was the meaning of his sending them with that question to the Lord.\*

He further adds that the Lord's honourable testimony to John, which directly follows, (ver. 7—11,) was in all probability especially timed to hinder on the part of those present, or of any to whom the notice of this message should come, any such misinterpretation of it, or misapplication of his own warning words, "Blessed is he who-soever shall not be offended in me,"† as should derogate in the least from the just esteem and honour in which the Baptist deserved ever to be holden. The Lord reminds those present of what John was, of what they themselves in times past had seen and found him—no reed shaken by every wind, but a cedar-tree braving the shock of storms—no server of the time, that would say soft things to kings,

\* *Serm.* 66. § 4: *Ite dicite illi; non quia ego dubito, sed ut vos instruamini. Ite, dicite illi: quod ego soleo dicere, ab illo audite: audistis præconem, confirmamini a iudice.*

† *Ibid.*: *Nam ut sciremus quia non de Johanne dixit: Illis abeuntibus cœpit dicere ad turbas de Johanne: dixit laudes ejus veras verax, Veritas.*

that he might wear the soft clothing of those that are in favour in king's palaces,—no such shaper therefore of his doctrines to the shifting moods of the times as would now seek for fear or for favour to go back from his former testimony to Christ. But what had they found him? a true successor in outward manner of life, and in inner spirit, to the old prophets—himself a prophet—"yea," the Lord adds out of his own deeper insight into the meaning of John's appearance, for this the multitude had not apprehended—"and more than a prophet."

But how "more than a prophet"? To this Augustine replies that he was more, and had higher honour, than any other prophet; first, in that he was the only prophet who was himself prophesied of and announced by others; his coming having indeed a double announcement; (Isai. xl. 3; Matt. iv. 5, 6;)\* and secondly, in that he was the connecting link between the old dispensation and the new; (Luke xvi. 16;) and himself, though not perfectly belonging to, yet partaking of the prerogatives of, the new.† And thirdly, which was indeed but another aspect of this second, he was more than any other prophet, in that he bore testimony, not as all others had done, to a Saviour yet future, but to one already present; and *that*, not in dark

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\* Thus *Serm.* 288. § 2: Hic propheta, immo amplius quam propheta, prænuntiari meruit per prophetam.

† *Serm.* 293. § 2: Videtur Johannes interjectus quidam limes Testamentorum duorum, Veteris et Novi. . . . Sustinet ergo personam vetustatis, et præconium novitatis. And in a sermon which the Benedictine editors reject, he is called legis et gratiæ fibula.

figures, but in plainest words, seeing with his eyes what many prophets and kings of the old covenant had desired to see and had not seen—they telling at most of a Sun which should one day rise up above the horizon, he actually gilded by the brightness of his risen beams.\*

But the further words, "For this is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face," (ver. 10,) with the explanation, "This is Elias which was for to come," (ver. 14,) added to that later declaration which all admit to have reference to John, "Elias is come already," (Matt. xvii. 11, 13,) how, it may be asked, shall these be reconciled with John's own distinct denial of his being Elias (John i. 21)? The solution of the apparent contradiction is of course not difficult, the key to it lying, as Augustine rightly remarks, in the words of the angel, that he should go before the Lord "in the spirit and power of Elias;" (Luke i. 17;) so that in one sense, that is literally, John the Baptist was not Elias, in another, that is in a figure, he was.† But at the same time Augus-

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\* *Con. duas Epp. Pelag.* l. 3. c. 4: Quasi præteritæ dispensationis limes quidam, qui mediatorem ipsum non aliquâ umbrâ futuri, vel allegoricâ significatione, vel ullâ propheticâ prænuntiatione venturum esse significans, sed digito demonstrans ait, Ecce agnus Dei, ecce qui tollit peccatum mundi. *Con. Litt. Petil.* l. 2. c. 37: Prioribus justis prænuntiare tantum Christum concessum est, huic autem et prænuntiare absentem, et videre præsentem. Cf. *Serm.* 288. § 2.

† *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 4: Si figuram præcursionis advertas, Johannes ipse est Elias, quod enim ille ad primum adventum, hoc ille ad secundum. Si proprietatem personæ interrogas, Johannes Johannes, Elias Elias.

tine does not believe that this coming of John the Baptist was the exhaustive fulfilment of the prophecy of Malachi, or more than a partial and initial one. There is yet in reserve an actual and personal coming of the great Reformer of the Old Testament, who, in contemplation of this, was withdrawn from the earth without tasting of death.\* In this I cannot but believe that he was right, and it is hard to perceive how the Lord could have been at more pains to declare to his disciples that so it should be, or to prevent their confounding these two cognate but distinct events, than at Matt. xvii. 11, He is; not to say that the same is more lightly indicated in his, "If ye will receive it," here. (ver. 14.)

The words that follow are more difficult: "Verily I say unto you, among them that are born of woman there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he;" (Matt. xi. 11;) nor has Augustine planted himself, as I believe, at the true point of view from which to explain them. Indeed he himself wavers between two expositions; sometimes he makes "the kingdom of heaven" to signify the future heavenly world, and thus the Lord to

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\* *In Ev. Joh. Tract. 4*: Quod erat Johannes ad primum adventum, hoc erit Elias ad secundum adventum. Quomodo duo adventus Judicis, sic duo præcones; cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 29. With this connects itself his faith, (*Serm.* 299. § 11,) as that of so many in the early Church, that Elijah with Enoch are the two witnesses of Rev. xi. 7, so that of him it should be true, mortem distulit, non evasit.



affirm that the lowest angel is greater than the greatest that is still compassed with infirmities here; but he does not lay much stress on this exposition, and only once or twice has suggested it.\* He rather and preferably makes the point of the declaration to lie in that "born of woman," finding a tacit antithesis between this and "born of a virgin," as was only He who uttered these words, who will then himself be that "least," or rather, lesser, "in the kingdom of heaven," who is greater than John.† But this interpretation is in every way most unsatisfying. How can we imagine that the Lord would have thought it needful to say with such emphasis that he was greater than John? Moreover He too is expressly declared to have been "made of a woman," (Gal. iv. 4,) which word therefore fails to express that antithesis to virgin, (cf. also John ii. 4; xix. 26,) which is necessary for this explanation; and further, as the most decisive objection of all to that exposition which would make the Lord to mean Himself by this "lesser in the kingdom of heaven," He was not

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\* *Con. Adv. Leg. et Proph.* l. 2. c. 5: Aut enim regnum cœlorum appellavit eo loco Dominus, quod nondum accepimus et in quo nondum sumus; et quia ibi sunt sancti angeli, quilibet in eis minor major est utique quolibet sancto et justo, portante corpus quod corumpitur et aggravat animam. Aut si regnum cœlorum in eâ sententiâ illic intelligi voluit, quâ et in hoc tempore significatur Ecclesia, profecto se ipsum Dominus significavit, quia nascendi tempore minor erat Johanne, major autem divinitatis aeternitate, et Dominicâ potestate. In like manner he suggests the two explanations, *Serm.* 66. § 2.

† *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 14: Minor nativitate, major potestate, major divinitate, majestate, claritate.



in the kingdom of heaven, since rather the kingdom of heaven was in Him, and unfolded itself from Him. For myself I cannot doubt that the point of the saying lies in the opposition, not between "born of woman" and "born of a virgin;" but between "born of woman" and "born of the Spirit;" which they all are that are in the new "kingdom of heaven," that kingdom of the Spirit which dates from Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost was given as, until the Son was glorified, he had not been given before; (John vii. 39;) our Lord declaring here that the mystery of regeneration, whereof all the faithful to the very least in the New Covenant are partakers, is a higher gift than any of which the greatest saints and servants of God, even a John himself, were partakers in the Old.

There is a certain fitness, Augustine observes, the same fitness which we may trace as running through the whole of the Baptist's history, in the fact, that the immediate occasion of his martyrdom was not his witness for Jesus as the Christ, or aught in immediate connexion with his Lord; but rather his assertion of the holiness of the Law: "It is not *lawful* for thee to have thy brother's wife." (Mark vi. 18.) He who was its last and noblest personification fitly sealed with his own blood his zeal for its holiness.\* At the same time that he, and such as he, inasmuch as they died for the truth, did in fact die for Christ, who *is* the Truth, that they were his martyrs as really as those who were called by his name, and shed

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxl. 10.*

their blood more immediately for his testimony—is a point which he oftentimes presses, and on which he strongly feels. Thus a sermon on the Maccabæan martyrs\* is dedicated entirely to this unity of the people of God before and after Christ, out of which unity it well became that the Christian Church should celebrate those martyrs who died before their King had died, or even had appeared, no less than those who died after.

And on deaths like this of the Baptist's, when the servants of God seem given into the hands of the wicked, who do unto them whatsoever they list, (Matt. xvii. 12,) he often takes occasion to remark how different to the eye of sense the dealings of God with some of his servants, from his dealings with others; those he gloriously delivers; these he appears to abandon to their foes; the three children are brought forth unscathed from the fiery furnace; the Maccabæan martyrs perish in the flames; (2 Macc. vi. 11; vii. 5;) Peter is delivered from the sword of Herod—from that sword just stained with his brother apostle's blood; (Acts xii. 2, 11;) one John the malice of an emperor fails to hurt, and he is plunged unharmed into the burning oil; another falls a victim to a woman's spite, and his life is given to a wanton dancing-girl's request. But shall we therefore say that those God delivered, and these not? Would such language rightly express the facts of the case? Should we not rather say, Those were delivered openly, and in the face of the world—these as really delivered,

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\* *Serm.* 300.

however their deliverance did not as openly appear; but like so much besides, is at present seen and apprehended only by the eye of faith.\*

The life, or rather the death, of Stephen naturally does not yield such varied and abundant matter for comment as that of the Baptist: for the whole of the proto-martyr's history, profoundly suggestive as in manifold ways it is, is yet confined within the limits of two chapters. All that we know of him is there: he starts suddenly as from the ranks into the very foremost place of peril and of honour, a standard-bearer of the truth;† he rises above the horizon, a great luminary of the Church, but sets for us almost as soon as risen; leaving to us one great discourse, one mighty deed. On this, however, Augustine has much. In the African Church the memory of the martyrs was especially dear. Some of the noblest of that noble army of martyrs were children of her own; and though now the days of the martyrs were over, the spirit that inspired them, and that pervades, though not without the

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\* *Serm.* 301. c. 3: Ergo illis Deus aderat, hos deseruerat? Absit. Immo utrisque adfuit, illis in aperto, istis in occulto. Illos visibiliter liberabat: istos invisibiliter coronabat. *Enarr.* 2<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xxxiii. 18: Ille qui tulit de flammâ tres pueros, numquid tulit de flammâ Machabæos? Nonne illi in ignibus hymnizabant, illi in ignibus expirabant? Deus trium puerorum, nonne ipse est et Machabæorum? Illos eruit, et illos non eruit? Immo utrosque eruit, sed tres pueros sic eruit, ut et carnales confunderentur.

† Augustine himself observes, with reference to this fact that it was the deacons and not the apostles who furnished the first martyr (*Serm.* 315. c. 19): Prior victima de agnis quam arietibus.

admixture of some turbid elements, the writings of Tertulian, had not passed away. And thus some of Augustine's most admirable discourses were delivered on the days dedicated to their memories; on St. Stephen he has several, and from these and other sources in his writings I select a few notices of him, who in so many aspects was the forerunner of St. Paul.

Augustine, without entering with any fulness into the scheme of Stephen's discourse, which is certainly difficult,—why, namely, it should have so long an exordium, why he should dwell so long on the patriarchal history, which was as familiarly known to his hearers as to himself, and which bore only most remotely on the matters of which he was accused—without professing to explain all this,\* yet gives an important hint on the subject, namely, that this long introduction was, in the nobler sense of the term, a *capitatio benevolentiae*. Having much to say, before he concluded, that would be most distasteful to his hearers, he would fain conciliate them so far as he might, and espe-

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\* He has however in one place a brief but valuable analysis of the earlier parts of the discourse, though one would fain have had the connexion traced also between these and the latter (*Serm.* 315. c. 2): *Hic prius exposuit illis ab initio legem Dei, ab Abraham usque ad Moysem, usque ad datam legem, usque ad introitum in terram promissionis; ut commendaret quia non erat verum testimonium unde illi calumniam commovebant [Acts vi. 13.] Deinde de Moyse dedit eis magnam similitudinem ad Christum. Reprobatus ab eis Moyses, et ipse eos liberavit; reprobatus liberavit. Sic et Dominus Christus reprobatus a Judæis, ipse illos est postea liberaturus.*

cially would impress on them, by dwelling so fully on the early privileges and election of the Abrahamic family, that these privileges were most precious to him, even while he was asserting that in Christ Jesus they had now become the common property of all the families of the earth.\*

The sharp severity of speech and tone which appears in some parts of Stephen's address to his fellow-countrymen Augustine is fond of contrasting with the truest love to them which broke forth in his dying prayer. And he bids us note how much of tenderest love will often lie hid under words that almost sound like words of bitterness and hate. Where could Stephen have found keener words than those—"Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost" (Acts vii. 51—53)? One who knew not the mysteries of love might suppose that he hated those whom he addressed in language such as this; and yet presently, when they added to all their former resistance to him those further utterances of their enmity, gnashing upon him with their teeth, yea, even under the showers of their cruel stones, he could pray for these same, and did pray for them, even in the agonies of painful death.†

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\* *Serm.* 319. c. 1: Conciliabat auditorem, ut commendaret Salvatorem. Blande cœpit, ut diu audiretur.

† *Serm.* 317. c. 4: Lingua clamat, cor amat; and in a beautiful passage, *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 6. § 3: Magnus impetus, sed columba sine felle sævit. *Serm.* 315. c. 2: Sævire videtur: lingua ferox, cor lene. Clamabat et amabat. Sæviebat, et salvos fieri volebat. Quis non crederet iratum, quis non crederet odiorum facibus inflammatum? Hoc dicat, qui cor non videt. Latebat cor ejus; sed audita sunt

And this example of Stephen's dying love Augustine, in his homiletic instruction, urges often on his hearers from another point of view. Many, when exhorted by the example of Christ their Lord to bless them that curse them, and to pray for them that despitefully use them, might perhaps make answer, "*He* could do this, *He* could say, even as they nailed Him to the cross, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' This was not difficult for Him, for He was God; but it is impossible for us." Augustine in reply bids them look not alone at their Master, but also at their fellow-servant, at one of like passions with themselves, by nature a sinful man—to look at Stephen, who under that shower of stones prayed for his murderers; and with his example before them to acknowledge that the same was possible for them, who had the same fountain of grace to draw from which he had, the same Saviour to turn to as he had,—a Saviour in whose strength they too might overcome hate and revenge, and all the evil passions of the mind.\*

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novissima verba ejus, et patuerunt occulta ejus cum lapidaretur: Domine, ne statuas illis hoc peccatum. Ubi est, Durâ cervice? Hoc est totum quod clamabas? hoc est totum quod sæviebas? foris clamabas, et intus orabas. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. cxxxii. 2.*

\* *Serm. 315. c. 6; 317. c. 2:* Quando audiunt: Pater, ignosce illis, quia nesciunt quid faciunt; dicunt sibi, Ipse hoc potuit tamquam Filius Dei, tamquam unicus Patris. Caro enim pendebat, sed Deus intus latebat. Nos autem quid sumus, qui ista faciamus? Fefellit qui jussit? Absit: non fefellit. Si multum ad te putas imitari Dominum tuum; adtende Stephanum conservum tuum. Dominus Christus, unicus Dei filius: numquid hoc Stephanus? Dominus Christus, de incorruptâ virgine natus: numquid hoc Ste-



It is singular that Augustine has not indicated with greater clearness the meaning of Stephen's beholding in that hour of his agony his Lord *standing* at the right hand of God, for it is exactly such a point as he seldom suffers to escape him. He often indeed notes that this is the only instance in which He is described as standing, that on every other occasion he is *sitting*, at the right hand of the Majesty on high; but he does not proceed to explain or to account for this exceptional case.\* The right explanation we owe to Gregory the Great†—namely, that it belongs to the passion of the moment that the dying martyr, filled with confidence in his Saviour's present help, should thus behold Him, not sitting in majestic calmness, but uprisen from his throne, and thus standing at the right hand of the Father, as in act to come forth to the help of his suffering servant,—all which we have taken up into our Collect on St. Stephen's day: "O blessed Jesus, who *standest* at the right hand of God *to succour* all those that suffer for Thee."

It is at least a pardonable play upon words, even if it

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phanus? Dominus Christus venit, non in carne peccati, sed in similitudine carnis peccati: numquid hoc Stephanus? Sic natus est ut tu; inde natus est, unde et tu; ab eo renatus est, a quo et tu.

\* He connects, indeed, Stephen's standing with his Lord's (*Serm.* 314. § 1): Jesum stantem videbat; ideo stabat et non cadebat, quia stans sursum et deorsum certantem desuper spectans invictas militi suo vires, ne caderet, suggerebat.

† The passage is as follows (*Hom. 29 in Evang.*): Sedere judicantis [adde, imperantis] est, stare vero pugnantis vel adjuvantis. Stephanus in labore certaminis positus stantem vidit, quem adiutorem habuit.



is no more, in which Augustine allows himself when he urges the *nomen et omen* of Stephen's name. He who first, being steadfast unto death, received the *crown* of life, had borne long since the prophecy of this his martyr's crown in the name of Stephen (στέφανος) which he bore.\*

The relation between a prayer and its answer is not always distinctly traced in Scripture. Like so much else which is there, it is left for us to draw out for ourselves from slight and scattered hints, rather than forcibly obtruded upon us. We are not told that there was any connexion between Peter's deliverance from the dungeon of Herod, and the prayer that "was made without ceasing of the Church unto God for him;" (Acts xii. 5;) yet who can doubt that there was such, and, his attention having been called to it, that it was the intention of the sacred historian to indicate such? Neither can we doubt that there was a deep inner connexion between Stephen's prayer and Paul's conversion. The apostle Paul was probably the direct fruit of the prayer which the dying martyr uttered for his enemies; of which enemies the "young man whose name was Saul" was so far the bitterest, that he was not content with having a *single* hand in the proto-martyr's death, but by keeping the clothes of the witnesses, and consequently the chief actors in the deed, and disencumbering them

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\* *Serm.* 314. § 2; *Enarr. in Ps.* lvi. 3: Stephanus lapidatus est, et quod vocabatur accepit; Stephanus enim *corona* dicitur. Less tolerable than this is another pun in which he allows himself on this same occasion; *Serm.* 317. c. 4: *Petris* lapidabatur qui pro *Petrâ* moriebatur, dicente apostolo, *Petra* autem erat Christus.

for their work, had as it were many hands in the slaughter.\*

The scattering of the disciples in the persecution that followed, which disciples yet “went everywhere preaching the word,” Augustine triumphantly compares to the scattering of sparks of fire, which before were heaped upon a single hearth, but now were flung abroad to kindle where-soever they alighted. The foolish Jews had thought to quench those torches, which indeed they only succeeded in scattering far and wide, and which presently set the world in a flame.†

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\* *Serm.* 316. § 7. Quantum sæviebat in illâ cæde, vultis audire? Vestimenta lapidantium servabat, ut omnium manibus lapidaret. *Serm.* 279. § 1: Sic aderat lapidantibus ut non ei sufficeret si tantum suis manibus lapidaret. Ut enim esset in omnium lapidantium manibus, ipse omnium vestimenta servabat, magis sæviens omnes adjuvando quam suis manibus lapidando.

† *Serm.* 316. c. 4: Fugati sunt fratres, sed tanquam ardentes faces, quocunque veniebant, accendebant. Stulti Judæi, quando illos de Jerosolymis fugabant, carbones ignis in silvam mittebant. And *Serm.* 116. c. 6, he compares the Church of Jerusalem to a heap of burning brands: Lapidato Stephano passa est illa congeries persecutionem; Sparsa sunt ligna, et accensus est mundus.

## CHAPTER VII.

IT is difficult not to regret that Augustine did not, among his other exegetical works, give to the Church a commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, seeing that for such a work the character of his mind, and the whole training of his life, eminently fitted him. He was of a spirit more akin to the great apostle of the Gentiles than any Father of the early Church. He, too, like Paul, had been brought by wonderful ways, and after many fearful struggles, there where he had found rest for his soul. Out of this great conflict he did not bring merely his wounds and his scars, but also a deep acquaintance with the devices of the enemy, with the weaknesses and treacheries of the human heart, with the mighty power of Him that had stood on his side to help and to save. But he has not bequeathed to the Church any such work. His brief *Scholia* on this Epistle, and his *Inchoata Expositio*, which, though it occupies sixteen columns, only handles the first five verses of the first chapter, and in which he did not proceed further, justly fearing the enormous size to which a commentary on that scale would grow, only slightly qualify this statement. His work on the Galatians, which might have been accepted as in part a substitute, belongs to an earlier period of his life, and with very

much of valuable, does not possess all the depth and fullness of his later exposition. For though that which Luther says of him, that "he was first roused up and made a man by the Pelagians when he strove against them," has something of that verbal exaggeration he often displays, yet to that controversy he did certainly owe much. In conflict with these gainsayers he learned to possess his truth as he had never done before, as but for this perhaps he never would have done at all, and not to possess only, but to enlarge and to deepen it.

But although we have not such a work from his pen, there is largest material for the exposition of this portion of Holy Scripture to be drawn, if one would bring it together, from almost all parts of his writings, and more especially from his treatises having reference to that controversy, and from several of his *Letters*. By most modern interpreters of the Romans, these rich and abundant mines have remained well nigh unwrought. It would be impossible in the compass of this present essay to do more than select two or three prominent passages of that Epistle, and to attempt to show from these the manner in which he has addressed himself to the exposition of this very deep and theologically central portion of God's word.\*

And, first, in regard of Rom. v. 12—21. This is

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\* See an interesting passage in his book *De Spir. et Litt.* c. 8, in which he expresses himself on the subject matter of this Epistle, and generally on the fitness of St. Paul to be eminently the preacher of the grace of God.

Augustine's stronghold and citadel in all his great controversy with the Pelagians.\* He felt, and rightly, that in the relations there set out, of Adam and Christ to one another, and of the progeny of each, respectively, to its natural and its spiritual head, the whole controversy between the Church and these deniers of her truth lay implicitly wrapped up. Indeed this chapter is the rock upon which all Pelagian schemes of theology, which proceed on the extenuation of the Fall, the denial of the significance of Adam's sin (save in the way of evil example) to any but himself,—which break up the race of man into a multitude of isolated atoms, touching, but not really connected with, one another, instead of contemplating it as one great whole,—must for ever shiver and come to nothing. In the light of this chapter such schemes appear as contrary to the revealed Word of God, as indeed they are to all deeper apprehensions which have been attained quite apart from Scripture, of the awful physical and spiritual bands which knit the members of the human family to one another. And to Augustine it was given, if not to feel this more strongly than any other, yet certainly to bring it out to the consciousness of the Church as no other hitherto had done.

The meaning of the latter part of that chapter, as he loves to draw it out, is as follows:—The apostle had spoken in what went before of Christ's death, and the

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\* It is a passage, ubi vel maxime fides Christiana consistit. (*Ep.* 190. § 3.)

fruits of that death ; but the question might well present itself ; How should the death of one have such significance for all ? St. Paul answers the question. This one is not merely one ; He stands in a relation to all men, which can only find its analogy in the relation in which Adam stood to all. He may be rightly called a "second Adam." In Adam the whole natural development of man was included ; the whole race is but the unfolding of that first, that one man. Exactly so Christ is a spiritual Head. The whole race of regenerate men were shut up in Him, are unfolded out of Him. They are but the one grain of gold beaten out, and extended into an infinite breadth. As the huge oak with its trunk and all its spreading branches is rudimentally wrapped up in the single acorn ; so the world, or mankind natural in Adam, and the Church, or mankind spiritual in Christ.\* What Adam and Christ were in *intenso*, they are in *extenso*. He often adduces, as a Scriptural confirmation of this view of the matter, the language and argument of the apostle to the Hebrews, (vii. 9,) who concludes that it was not Abraham alone that paid tithes to Melchisedek, but that all the future Levites paid tithes in him.† The whole moral history of the world oscillates between two persons. They

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\* *Op. Imp. con. Jul.* l. 2. c. 163 : Unde fit ut totum genus humanum quodam modo sint homines duo, primus et secundus. And again, *Serm.* 90 : Venit unus contra unum ; contra unum qui sparsit unus qui collegit. *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 3. § 12 : Homo, et homo : homo ad mortem, et homo ad vitam.

† *Op. Imperf. con. Jul.* l. 6. c. 22.

are the centres round which everything revolves—the two poles of humanity—the two successive champions and representatives of the race. One is defeated, and the lot of the whole race for thousands of years is servitude and shame; one is victorious, and vast and enduring as were the issues of the other's defeat, those of his victory are vaster and more enduring still.

Only out of this view of the race as being included in Adam, do we attain any right apprehension of the significance of Adam's sin. It was not so much *a* sin, and differing from others only in that it was the first, and when compared with many that followed perhaps a slight sin; which is the Pelagian position—not this so much as *the* sin, the head and front of the world's offending, not the first only, but the greatest, the mother sin in which every after sin was enfolded.\* It was a bruising and injuring of the seed, and thus more or less a marring and distorting of each single branch and fibre and leaf which should evolve itself therefrom. It was a flinging of poison into the fountain head, and thus an infecting of every drop of the stream.† And only so do we attain any right

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\* *Op. Imp. con. Jul.* l. 6. c. 21, 27.

† In a minor detail of his interpretation of this passage, but one on which he lays considerable stress, it is now acknowledged by all that he was at fault. He found at Rom. 5. 12, in his Italic version, as it is now in the Vulgate, *In quo omnes peccaverunt*; which in quo he referred to Adam, as though St. Paul would say, "*In whom* all sinned." The words are ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον, and are rightly rendered in our version "*for that* all have sinned," (ἐφ' ᾧ = ὅτι, as 2 Cor. 5. 4 = quatenus,) the apostle meaning in those words to say



apprehension of the significance of Christ's righteousness; for that other is but one side, the sadder and the darker side, of the truth. That which held good for death, held good also for life. The same law of intimate union between the members of the race and their head, which made one man's sin so diffusive of death, has made one man's obedience or righteousness so diffusive of life. Christ shall diffuse himself no less effectually than Adam, as the one by generation, so the other by regeneration.

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that no following man was capable of arresting the tide of evil, and so being a new head of life, an ἀρχηγός ζωῆς for the race, inasmuch as each in his turn and by his own act, not merely by succession from Adam, came under the law of sin, and so under the law of death. As far as these words went Julian had entire right on his side, explaining them thus (*Op. Imperf. c. Jul. l. 2. c. 174*): *In quo omnes peccaverunt, nihil aliud indicat quam, quia omnes peccaverunt.* Considering how much turned on the words, and how often they came into debate between them, (see again *l. 6. c. 23*) it is strange that Augustine should not have turned to the original. The error does not seriously, or indeed at all, affect his position. That Adam's sin was the fontal-sin of all other which followed; that also it reacted on the moral, and through that on the physical, condition not of one man, but of all who in that one were wrapped up, this is quite strongly enough stated in the passage, to bear the subtraction of the further proof of it which Augustine drew from a mistaken interpretation of these words. Such assertions as the following still remain true, though they are not found in these words (*Con. duas Ep. Pel. l. 4. c. 4*): *In illo primo homine peccâsse omnes intelligantur, quia in illo fuerunt omnes, quando ille peccavit; De Pecc. Mer. et Rem. l. 3. c. 7*: *In Adam omnes tunc peccaverunt, quando in ejus naturâ, illâ insitâ vi, quâ eos gignere poterat, adhuc omnes ille unus fuerunt; De Civ. Dei, l. 13. c. 14*: *Omnes fuimus in illo uno, quando omnes fuimus ille unus; nondum erat nobis sigillatim creata et distributa forma, in quâ singuli viveremus, sed jam natura erat seminalis, ex quâ propagaremur.*

Nay there shall be, as there ever must be, a mightier power in the good than in the evil; for while the one sin was sufficient to ruin the world, the righteousness of one did not merely do away with that one sin, but with all the innumerable others which had unfolded themselves out of that one.\*

But the Epistle to the Romans, before it describes the bringing in of Him, the restorer of all which Adam had forfeited and lost, sets forth the preparatory discipline of the law under which man was being trained for welcoming that Saviour, when at length in the fulness of time he should be revealed; and among the ends to which the law thus given should serve, the apostle declares that it "entered that the offence might abound." (Rom. v. 20.) Two questions present themselves here, and, as carrying us into the heart of Augustine's exposition of this Epistle, and with it of his whole theology, we may consider severally his answer to each. And first, In what way did the en-

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\* Thus in his important letter, *Ad Hilarium* (*Ep.* 157. § 12): In hac causâ duo constituuntur homines, Adam, ex quo consistit generatio carnalis, et Christus, ex quo regeneratio spiritalis. Sed quia tantum ille homo, iste autem et Deus et homo, non quomodo illa generatio uno delicto obligat, quod est ex Adam, ita ista regeneratio unum delictum solum solvit, quod est ex Adam. Sed illi quidem generationi sufficit ad condemnationem unius delicti connexio, quidquid enim postea homines ex malis suis operibus addunt, non pertinet ad illam generationem, sed ad humanam conversationem; huic autem regenerationi non sufficit illud delictum tantummodo solvere, quod ex Adam trahitur, sed quidquid etiam postea ex iniquis operibus humanæ conversationis accedit. Ideo iudicium ex uno in condemnationem, gratia autem ex multis delictis in justificationem.

trance of the law cause the offence or sin to abound? To this he has a double answer. The law caused sin to abound, in that sin was more sinful now, being done against the *express* commandment of God, the *lex manifesta*,\* than when done only against the *lex occulta*, that commandment written at the beginning on the hearts of men, but which now through long neglect had become more or less illegible and obliterated there. Where there is no law, there indeed is sin, but not transgression.†

But this was not all; not in this way only did the entrance of the law cause the offence to abound. The law had also in a deeper sense, and one which fearfully revealed the evil of man's heart, an *irritating* power. Man craves to be *αὐτόνομος*, and the very fact of a law given does of itself suggest resistance to and defiance of that law. The prohibited becomes by the very fact of the

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\* *Serm.* 170. c. 2.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* cii: Quare lege subintrante abundavit peccatum? Quia nolebant se confiteri homines peccatores, additâ lege facti sunt et *prævaricatores*. Prævaricator enim non est quisque, nisi cum legem transgressus fuerit. Cf. *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 7; *Serm.* 170. c. 2. Yet Augustine at the same time is very earnest in not allowing the giving of a written law to call into question that there went another eternal law before that, however man may have refused, and through refusing become unable distinctly, to read it. Thus *Enarr. in Ps.* lvii. 1: Hoc et antequam Lex daretur, nemo ignorare permissus est ut esset unde judicarentur et quibus Lex non esset data. Sed ne sibi homines aliquid defuisse quererentur, scriptum est et in tabulis, quod in cordibus non legebant; non enim scriptum non habebant, sed legere nolebant. Oppositum est oculis eorum quod in conscientia videre cogerentur, et quasi forinsecus admotâ voce Dei, ad interiora sua homo compulsus est.

prohibition to be also the desired. The stream of man's corruptions fretted and raged more furiously for the obstacles placed in its way; as some mountain torrent foams round a rock that has fallen in its bed; which, not sufficing to dam it up, only rouses it to fiercer activity than before.\*

But the yet deeper question still remained. How was this giving of a law which made the guilty guiltier, and which thus stirred up and roused the evil which might else have remained dormant in man's heart, reconcilable with the love and righteousness of God? In the same way as the physician does nothing contrary to or unworthy of his art, whereof the end is, the healing of men, when he causes the floating sickness which pervaded the whole frame, to concentrate itself into some fixed shape of disease, which then and only then he can encounter and overcome.† The sick man would not perhaps have acknow-

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\* *De Spir. et Lit.* c. 4: Lex quamvis bona, auget prohibendo desiderium malum: sicut aquæ impetus, si in eam partem non cesset influere, vehementior fit obice opposito, cujus molem cum evicerit majore cumulo præcipitatus violentius per prona devolvitur; nescio quo enim modo hoc ipsum quod concupiscitur, fit jucundius, dum vetatur. And again *Serm.* 153. c. 5: Minor erat concupiscentia, quando ante Legem securus peccabas; nunc autem oppositis tibi obicibus Legis, fluvius concupiscentiæ quasi frenatus est paululum, non siccatus: sed increcente impetu qui te ducebat obicibus nullis, obruit te obicibus ruptis. Cf. *De Div. Quæst.* qu. 66.

† We have the confession of the heathen to this effect. Seneca (*Ep.* 56): Omnia enim vitia in aperto leviora sunt: morbi quoque tunc ad sanitatem inclinant, cum ex abdito erumpunt, ac vim suam proferunt.

ledged himself as sick before, and therefore might have refused to submit himself to the painful processes of cure.\* The law, demanding and threatening, revealed man to himself, who was hitherto in great part hidden from himself. It made him see his wound, and thus sent him to his Healer, to Him too who should enable him by assisting grace to do those things which the law indeed had required of him, but had never been able to bring about in him;† so that the wondrous circle ends in the establishing of that law which seemed at first about to be utterly overthrown. (Rom. iii. 31.)

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\* The following quotations will put us in the right point of view for understanding the position which Augustine took, justifying the righteousness of God. *Enarr. in Ps. cii. 7*: Non crudeliter hoc fecit Deus, sed consilio medicinæ; aliquando enim videtur sibi homo sanus et ægrotat, et in eo quod ægrotat et non sentit, medicum non quærit; augetur morbus, crescit molestia, quæritur medicus, et totum sanatur. And again, *In Ev. Joh. Tract. 3. § 11, 14*: Lex minabatur, non opitulabatur; jubebat, non sanabat; languorem ostendebat, non auferebat: sed illi præparabat medico venturo cum gratiâ et veritate: tanquam ad aliquem quem curare vult medicus, mittat primo servum suum, ut ligatum illum inveniat. Cf. *Ep. 145. § 3*: Lex itaque docendo et jubendo quod sine gratiâ impleri non potest, homini demonstrat suam infirmitatem, ut quærat demonstrata infirmitas Salvatorem, a quo sancta voluntas possit, quod infirma non posset. Lex igitur adducit ad fidem, fides impetrat Spiritum largiorem, diffundit Spiritus caritatem, implet caritas legem . . . Ita bona est lex illi, qui eâ legitime utitur; utitur autem legitime, qui intelligens quare sit data, per ejus comminationem confugit ad gratiam liberantem. Cf. *Serm. 155. c. 4*; *170. c. 2*; *Ad Simplic. l. 1. qu. 1*; *Ep. 196. c. 2*.

† *De Fide et Oper. c. 14*: Sequuntur enim bona opera justificatum, non præcedunt justificandum—"a golden sentence," as one of the greatest of our old English divines has termed it.

On one more passage in this Epistle, and one that eminently brings out what is characteristic in Augustine's exposition, some further words may be added. It is well known that there have been in the Church two different expositions of Rom. vii. 7—25. Is the apostle there describing the conflicts and struggles of the regenerate man *inter renovandum*? or is he describing those of the man as yet not partaker of Christ, but only brought by the law under strong convictions of sin and of the demands which that holy law makes on his obedience? Augustine, in the early part of his Christian life, and in conformity with the view of the passage which had been the prevalent one in all the times before him, understood St. Paul to be occupied here in setting forth the struggles of the man not actually partaker as yet of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Thus in such writings of his as were composed and published at this period, we have an exposition of the passage according to this earlier scheme,\* while at the close of his life he states, what indeed his treatment of this passage in many of his later writings would without this statement have made sufficiently manifest, namely that he had seen cause to change his view of this Scripture; and at the same time he gives the reasons which had moved him to this change.† In this matter also we may doubtless trace the influence which that same contest with the Pelagians had upon his whole habit of thought,

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\* As *De Div. Quæst.* qu. 66; *Ad Simplicianum*, l. 1. c. 1.

† *Retract.* l. 1. c. 23; *Con. duas Ep. Pel.* l. 1. c. 10. § 22.



and on the form of his theology. These men, as is well known, magnified the natural powers of man, gave all to nature, which they did not consider now to be otherwise than in its original integrity and as it came from God; and however *in word* they might attribute something to the grace of God, yet in fact that grace, when more closely inspected, was but nature in disguise. And it seemed to him that the passage, understood as he had once understood it, putting as it did language such as this into the mouth of the man not as yet under grace, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (ver. 22), favoured too much those erroneous views of the powers of our un-renewed nature, which were by those heretics entertained, cast a certain slight on that sanctifying and renewing grace of the Spirit whereby alone we either will or do that which is well pleasing in God's sight.\*

It may perhaps be allowed me without presumption here to observe that I do not believe Augustine to have been right in thus going back from the Church's and from his own earlier exposition of this chapter. There would be much more in his objection, if the only alternative were between the accepting of these words as the voice of the natural man, or else of the man renewed in the spirit of his mind. But a third course is possible, namely, to con-

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\* Non video, quomodo diceret homo sub lege: Condelector legi secundum interiorem hominem, cum ipsa delectatio boni quâ etiam non consentit ad malum non timore pœnæ sed amore justitiæ, (hoc est enim condelectari,) non nisi gratiæ deputanda sit.



sider them as the utterance of the man convinced, and that by the Spirit of God, of sin and of righteousness, on the way to, but not yet arrived at, the blessed freedom of the spirit in Christ Jesus, seeing it afar off, and struggling toward, though not grasping it as yet.

Nor does Augustine himself fail distinctly to observe that while he is escaping from one danger, he is, by the new interpretation which he is introducing here, running into another. If that which he left might seem to play into the hands of the Pelagians, ascribing too much to the natural powers of man, did not that which he now favoured, and which his influence caused to be received without a question in the Western Church for more than a thousand years, ascribe too little to the regenerate man? did it not set the standard of his obedience too low? He is quite aware that this charge might be brought against it, and is very earnest in vindicating his exposition of the words\* from all antinomian abuse; in giving all care lest the evil of men should turn that which in itself was healthful food into poison.† It is plain that to such abuse it would be much more exposed according to his later exposition than according to that of the earlier Church, though of course this in itself would not be sufficient reason to reject it.

For instance, in regard of the words which the easiest

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\* *Difficilis et periculosus locus*, as in one place he calls it. (*Serm.* 154. c. 1; cf. *Serm.* 151, c. 1.)

† *Serm.* 151. c. 1: *Ne homines male sumentes salubrem cibum, vertant in venenum.*

yield themselves to such an abuse, which might be and have been the most eagerly seized by the false-hearted, who are looking in Christ's Gospel not for strength to deliver them from sin, but excuses for remaining in sin—I mean the apostle's concluding words, “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin;” (vii. 25;) he continually urges that all this impotence for good whereof the regenerate man here or elsewhere complains, has solely to do with the interior region of his heart and his inability to bring the thoughts and desires of his heart into a perfect conformity to the will of God, and has nothing at all to do with the exterior sphere of his acts.\* It is one thing *concupiscere*, another *post concupiscentias ire*. So long as we bear about this body we shall not altogether be delivered from the first; for the promise is not even to those who walk in the Spirit, “Ye shall not *have* the lust of the flesh;” but it is most truly, “Ye shall not *fulfil* the lust of the flesh.”

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\* *De Nupt. et Concup.* l. 2, c. 31: Quod sic intelligendum est, mente servio legi Dei, non consentiendo legi peccati, carne autem servio legi peccati, habendo desideria peccati, quibus etsi non consentio, nondum tamen penitus careo. See the four preceding chapters, which have all an important bearing on this subject. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps.* LXXV. 3. Thus too on the confession of the apostle, (for he naturally rejects altogether the unworthy evasion that St. Paul is speaking of another, not of himself,) “The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not that I do,” (ver. 19,) he asks (*Serm.* 154): Itane Apostolus Paulus nolebat facere adulterium, et faciebat adulterium? nolebat esse avarus, et erat avarus? Cf. *Con. duas Ep. Pel.* l. 1. c. 10. § 18.

(Gal. v. 16.)\* And he distinguishes between the inhabitatio peccati, over which the faithful man still mourns, and the regnum peccati, which in him has been destroyed. (Rom. vi. 12.) The Canaanite *will* dwell in the land, but he is under tribute.† The Christian soldier is not here complaining of defeat, but that which he grudges is to be always at war, always in a conflict, even though in Christ Jesus he is evermore a conqueror therein.‡

Augustine brings into closest connexion with this passage in the Romans, and gives a right interpretation of, those other words of the same apostle, so often misapplied in his own time, and so often misapplied still, "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life," (2 Cor. iii. 6,) which are often taken as though "the letter" meant the letter of Scripture, which profited nothing, which might often even be so misused as to "kill," at any rate would not make alive, unless the inner spiritual meaning, or "the spirit," were discovered and drawn out. This assertion, which of course has its truth,—indeed Augustine tells us that, used in this sense, the passage was one of his great teacher

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\* *Ep.* 196. c. 2.

† See an important passage for his teaching on all this subject, *Exp. Ep. ad Gal.* v. 17, 18. He draws a distinction perhaps verbally hardly to be justified, but of which the intention is plain: Aliud est peccare, aliud habere peccatum.

‡ Thus in affecting words (*Serm.* 151. c. 8): Nolo semper vincere; sed volo aliquando ad pacem venire. And again, on the present conflict with indwelling sin: Quamdiu vitiis repugnatur, plena pax non est, quia et illa quæ resistunt periculoso debellantur prælio, et illa quæ victa sunt nondum securo triumphantur otio, sed adhuc sollicito premuntur imperio.

Ambrose's favourite sayings,\*—has yet nothing to do with what the apostle is stating in these words ; and the fact of this explanation having both in old times and new acquired so great a currency is a striking example of the tendency to isolate statements of Scripture, and to interpret them independently of the context which can alone rightly explain them. "The letter" here, according to all the necessities of the context, is the law, called "the letter" because *written* on tables of stone ; the whole dispensation, commanding and threatening, yet not quickening, of the Old Testament. This, as the apostle in harmony with all his other teaching declares, "killeth," not merely negatively, in that it does not make alive, but positively ; for, as Augustine admirably brings out, the true parallel and interpretation of the words is to be found in those other words of the apostle, "I was alive without the law once, &c.;" while "the spirit" here is that dispensation of the Spirit of which he speaks Rom. viii. 1—11, as that in which, and in which only, resides the power of making men alive unto God.†

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\* *Conf.* l. 6. c. 4.

† *De Spir. et Litt.* c. 4: Doctrina quippe illa, quâ mandatum accipimus continenter recteque vivendi, littera est occidens, nisi adsit vivificans spiritus. Neque enim solo illo modo intelligendum est quod legimus, Littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat ; ut aliquid figurate scriptum, cujus est absurda proprietas, non accipiamus sicut littera sonat, sed aliud quod significat intuentes interiorem hominem spiritali intelligentiâ nutriamus ; . . . sed etiam illo, eoque vel maxime, quo apertissime alio loco dicit, Concupiscentiam nesciebam, nisi lex diceret: Non concupisces. And c. 5: Volo demonstrare illud quod ait apostolus: Littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat, non de

figuratis locutionibus dictum, quamvis et illinc congruenter accipiatur, sed potius de lege aperte quod est malum prohibente; and c. 19: Lex enim sine adjuvante Spiritu procul dubio est littera occidens; cum vero adest vivificans Spiritus, hoc ipsum intus conscriptum facit diligi, quod foris scriptum lex faciebat timeri. Yet he is not himself uniformly true to the right explanation, clearly as he has stated it here, for see *De Doctr. Christ.* l. 3. c. 5.

## CHAPTER VIII.

IN this concluding chapter I will adduce a few miscellaneous specimens of Augustine's insight into the Word of God—evidences of the power with which it had taken hold of himself, of the tact and skill with which he unfolded it to others.

Matt. xix. 23—26. His explanation of this passage furnishes an excellent example of the manner in which he clears away a difficulty by a deeper penetration into the meaning of the words before him, by thus setting himself at their moral centre, and unfolding them from thence. The disciples had seen the rich young man go sorrowing away, and heard the Lord say, "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God;" whereupon they exclaim, "Who then can be saved?" This question of theirs, Augustine observes, showed how deeply they had entered into the meaning of their Lord's words. For at first sight it would not appear as though the difficulty of a *rich* man's entering into the kingdom involved a difficulty for *all*; nay, from the very exceptional character of the assertion, it would seem to follow that for the poor it was not difficult, but easy. Whence then this question, implying a doubtfulness generated by that

declaration of their Lord, whether any man could be saved? It arose from the fact, as he admirably brings out, that the disciples saw into the deeper meaning of their Lord's words; they understood that the "rich"\* of whom He spake were not merely the rich in possessions, but the rich in desires, the lovers of riches, whether they had them, or had them not. And thus out of a deeply painful sense of the difficulty of being really poor, that is, poor in spirit, of detaching the soul from the love of the creature, and from trusting in the world, "they were exceedingly amazed, saying, Who then can be saved?"

And how well he unfolds the Lord's further declaration, "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible;" showing that it does not mean that God will dispense with this law of his kingdom, seeing that else so many would be excluded from it, that He will widen the eye of the needle till it is large enough for the man of worldly lusts, (actually rich or not makes no difference,) to pass through it with all his baggage; but

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\* After much that is admirable, he goes on to say (*Enarr. in Ps. li. 9*): Illi apud se dicentes, Quinam poterit salvari, quid attenderunt? Non facultates, sed cupiditates. Viderunt enim etiam psos pauperes, etsi non habentes pecuniam tamen habere avaritiam. And again (*Quæst. Evang. l. 2. qu. 47*): Eo manifestatur omnes cupidos, etiam si facultatibus hujus mundi careant, ad hoc genus divitum quod est reprehensum pertinere; quia postea dixerunt qui audiebant: Et quis poterit salvus fieri? cum incomparabiliter major turba sit pauperum: videlicet intelligentes in eo numero deputari etiam illos, qui quanquam talia non habeant, tamen habendi cupiditate rapiuntur.



rather, "With God all things are possible," is the same as saying, "All things are possible to him that believeth : " this, which it is impossible for man to accomplish in his own strength, namely, this making of himself poor in spirit, this loosening of himself from the bands which bind him so fast to the world and to the creature, shall yet be possible for him in the strength of God. The impossible thing, which yet is possible with God, is not the saving of the rich man, but the making of the rich man poor, one of God's poor, and so an inheritor of his kingdom.\*

Matt. xxvi. 60. The question has been sometimes asked, and not always satisfactorily answered, wherein were the witnesses that witnessed against the Lord *false* witnesses, as by both the evangelists who make mention of them they are styled? The Lord *had* said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." (John ii. 19.) Wherein then did they witness untruly? Not certainly, as some have said, in taking literally what He had spoken figuratively. This might have been dulness of apprehension, but would not have constituted falsehood. But as Augustine rightly urges, a very small turn

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\* *Quæst. Ev.* l. 2. qu. 47 : Quod autem ait, Quæ impossibilia sunt apud homines, possibilia sunt apud Deum, non ita accipiendum est, quod cupidi et superbi, qui nomine illius divitis significati sunt, in regnum cœlorum sint intraturi cum suis cupiditatibus et superbiâ, sed possibile est Deo ut per verbum ejus . . . a cupiditate temporalium ad caritatem æternorum, et a perniciosâ superbiâ ad humilitatem saluberrimam convertantur.

which they gave to his words in reporting them, entirely altered their character. He had said, "If you destroy, I will rebuild;" He had never proposed, nor even seemed to propose, as in the wantonness of power, himself to destroy and throw down the holy temple of God, that so He might have the opportunity of displaying his might in the building up of it anew; He had but presented Himself as the repairer of the ruins which they might effect; and the slight alteration of his *Solvite*, into the *Solvam* which they put in his mouth, quite altered the character of the saying; while at the same time the falsehood, for its readier acceptance, would fain preserve a certain resemblance to the truth.\*

Luke iv. 13. How much of practical and edifying Augustine often draws from single words in the Scripture. Thus on the hint which the third evangelist furnishes in his record of the Temptation, that when the Evil One departed from our Lord, it was only "for a season," he takes occasion to bring this first great temptation, which signalized the opening of Christ's ministry, into relation with the second, which signalized its close, compares the temptation of the wilderness with that of the garden; and contrasts the two. The enemy in the first tries to overcome his constancy by bringing to bear against it all *pleasurable* things, in the last all *painful* things. He knocked first at the door of desire, and, when that proved closed against him, at the door of fear. And as it fared

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\* *Serm.* 315. c. 1: Vicina voluit esse falsitas veritati.

with the Master, so shall it be with each one of the servants; they, too, shall have to tread both on the lion and the adder, to resist now a threatening, now a flattering, world.\*

Luke xxiii. 39—43. Augustine magnifies often, and with justice, the heroic character of the faith of the penitent malefactor, how far it exceeded all ordinary faith, how far it exceeded in some respects even the faith of the apostles themselves.† Nor does he fail to take note of

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\* *Enarr. 3<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xxx. 5*: Hujusmodi pugnæ exemplum ipse tibi Imperator tuus, qui propter te etiam tentari dignatus est, in se demonstravit. Et primo tentatus est illecebris; quia tentata est in illo janua cupiditatis, quando eum tentavit diabolus, dicens, Dic lapidibus istis ut panes fiant; Adora me, et dabo tibi regna ista; Mitte te deorsum quia scriptum est, Quia Angelis suis mandavit de te, et in manibus tollent te. Omnis hæc illecebra cupiditatem tentat. At ubi clausam januam invenit cupiditatis in eo qui tentabatur pro nobis, convertit se ad tentandam januam timoris, et præparavit illi passionem. Denique hoc dicit Evangelista, Et consummatâ tentatione, diabolus recessit ab eo ad tempus. Quid est, ad tempus? Tanquam rediturus, et tentaturus januam timoris, quia clausam invenit januam cupiditatis. Cf. *Serm. 284*: Quid ait Evangelista? Postquam perfecit diabolus omnem tentationem: omnem, sed ad illecebras pertinentem. Restabat alia tentatio in asperis et duris, in sævis, in atrocibus atque immitibus restabat alia tentatio. Hoc sciens Evangelista, quid peractum esset, quid restaret, ait, Postquam complevit diabolus omnem tentationem, recessit ab eo ad tempus. Discessit ab eo, id est, insidians serpens, venturus est rugiens leo, sed vincet eum qui conculcabit leonem et draconem.

† *Serm. 232. c. 6*: Magna fides: huic fidei quid addi possit, ignoro. Titubaverunt ipsi qui viderunt Christum mortuos suscitantem; credidit ille qui videbat secum in ligno pendentem. Quando illi titubaverunt, tunc ille credidit. Qualem fructum Christus de arido ligno percepit? . . . Non solum credebat resurrecturum, sed etiam regna-

the symbolic character of the whole wondrous transaction, and the prophecy that was contained in the bearing severally of the penitent and obdurate malefactor, of all the after relations of men to the crucified Lord; one portion of the sinful race turning to Him, looking and living; the other turning away, and abiding in death.\*

Acts ii. 1—4. The giving of the law from Mount Sinai has been often compared, especially in modern times, with the giving of the new law, or rather of the Gospel, from that other mount, where the Lord sat down with his disciples; (Matt. v. 1;) and the circumstances which attended the speaking of that word of God and this, were undoubtedly very characteristic of the dispensations which they severally ushered in. But of old, the parallel and the contrast was rather drawn between Sinai and Pentecost; and how strikingly Augustine draws out the parallel of likeness and opposition between the two, may be seen in the extract given below; one of many passages of like kind that might be quoted.† Nor does

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turum. Pendenti, crucifixo, cruento, hærenti, Cum veneris, inquit, in regnum tuum: Et illi, Nos sperabamus. Ubi spem latro invenit, discipulus perdidit. Cf. *Serm.* 32. § 2.

\* *Serm.* 285. § 2: Ita factæ sunt tres cruces, tres caussæ. Unus latronum Christo insultabat, alter sua mala confessus Christi se misericordiæ commendabat. Crux Christi in medio non fuit supplicium, sed tribunal: de cruce quippe insultantem damnavit, credentem liberavit. Timete, insultantes, gaudete, credentes: hoc faciet in claritate, quod fecit in humilitate.

† *Serm.* 155. c. 6: Sed videte ibi quomodo, et hic quomodo. Ibi plebs longe stabat, timor erat, amor non erat; nam usque adeo timu-

he miss the relation which this day, (wherein for one prophetic moment at least, the distinction of languages disappeared,) bore to that earlier day in which the tongues of mankind were divided. (Gen. xi. 1—9.) Here was a pledge and a promise, that the one language and one speech which had thus been lost, should yet through the Church be given back, that a day should arrive when all should be again of “one lip” as at the first.\*

Acts x. 9—16. There are two ways in which the vision of the sheet, full of “all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things,

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erunt, ut dicerent ad Moysem, Loquere tu ad nos, et non nobis loquatur Dominus, ne moriamur. Descendit ergo, sicut scriptum est, Deus in Sinâ in igne, sed plebem longe stantem territans, et digito suo scribens in lapide, non in corde. Huc autem quando venit Spiritus Sanctus, congregati erant fideles in unum; nec in monte terruit, sed intravit in domum. De cœlo quidem factus est subito sonus, quasi ferretur flatus vehemens: sonuit, sed nullus expavit. Audisti sonum, vide et ignem, quia et in monte utrumque erat, et ignis et sonitus; sed illic etiam fumus, hic vero ignis serenus. Visæ sunt enim illis linguæ divisæ, velut ignis. Numquid de longinquo territans? Absit, nam insedit super unumquemque eorum, et cœperunt linguis loqui, sicut Spiritus dabat eis pronuntiare.

\* *Serm.* 271: Sicut enim post diluvium superba impietas hominum terrim contra Dominum ædificavit excelsam, quando per linguas diversas dividi meruit genus humanum, ut unaquæque gens linguâ propriâ loqueretur, ne ab aliis intelligeretur; sic humilis fidelium pietas earum linguarum diversitatem Ecclesiæ contulit unitati, ut quod discordia dissipaverat, colligeret caritas, et humani generis tanquam unius corporis membra dispersa ad unum caput Christum compaginata redigerentur, et in sancti corporis unitatem dilectionis igne conflarentur. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps.* liv. 10: Spiritus superbiæ dispersit linguas, Spiritus Sanctus congregavit linguas.

and fowls of the air," and the command addressed to Peter in regard of these, "Kill and eat," may be understood. Either Peter was thus taught that the Levitical distinction between clean and unclean meats had ceased, that this great line of practical demarcation between Jew and Gentile was taken away, and left to draw his own conclusion that the separation itself, which this distinction so greatly helped to maintain, was not intended to exist any longer; or else, which seems to me the better, though by much the seldomer, view of the vision, to say with Augustine, that all these unclean things in the vessel *represented the heathen*. This is more agreeable with ver. 16: "What God has cleansed, that call not thou common;" for assuredly it was not the hitherto forbidden meats, but the heathen, and more particularly Cornelius, whom God had cleansed, and whom Peter declares (ver. 28) that he, through this vision, had learned not to call common or unclean. The only difficulty in this explanation is found in the commandment, "Kill and eat," and what that will mean; but this, which might seem at first sight the weak point of this interpretation, is in reality very far from so being. It only needs that we keep in mind the higher sacramental uses which eating has in almost all religions, eminently in the Christian, to discover the key to these words. That which is eaten is entirely incorporated into and assimilated with the eater: there is thus the innermost identification of the one and the other. The command then to Peter is, in fact, that he should boldly incorporate the heathen into that body of



which he is here, and for the moment, contemplated as the organ and the mouth.\*

Acts x. 44. Augustine explains, and no doubt rightly, the exceptional case of the baptism of Cornelius, who, with those that belonged to him, received the Holy Spirit, not as others in baptism or after, but before, of which, he observes, there is no other example in all Scripture†—namely, that it was for the entire removing of Peter's doubts whether the Gentile converts should be admitted into the fellowship of the Church at once, and without the process of first becoming Jews. It was the Lord himself deciding the question, and saying to his apostle, "Why doubtest thou about water? Behold, *I* already am here."‡

Rom. xi. 2—4. On the words of Elijah here quoted, "I only am left," (1 Kin. xix. 10, 14,) with the rebuke of God which follows, "I have reserved to myself" not

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\* *Serm.* 125. § 9: Petro dictum est, Macta et manduca, ut ostenderenter gentes credituræ et intraturæ in corpus Ecclesiæ, sicut quod manducamus in corpus nostrum intrat. Cf. *Serm.* 149. c. 5—7: Occidendi ergo erant et manducandi, id est ut interficeretur in eis vita præterita, quæ non noverant Christum, et transierent in corpus ejus, tanquam in novam vitam . . . societatis Ecclesiæ. Cf. *Serm.* 266. § 6; and *Enarr. in Ps.* ciii. 11. Grotius, who is much readier to accept Scripture mysteries than he is commonly esteemed, follows him here, though without allusion to his predecessor: Linteum de cælo delapsum intellexit esse *Ecclesiam cælitus collectam*. *Apoc.* 21. 2. Nec in Ecclesiam involvuntur, nisi jam mundati. Occidere, est tollere in eis quod restat de veteri homine: *manducare, sibi adunare*.

† *Serm.* 269. § 2: Singulare occurrit exemplum.

‡ *Serm.* 99. c. 12: Quid de aquâ dubitas? jam *Ego* hic sum. Cf. *Serm.* 266. § 7.



thee only, as thou supposest, but "seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal," Augustine makes many profitable remarks; likening the aspect of the Church in its present condition to a barn-floor, where there shows to the eye at first sight nothing but a heap of chaff. Yet if one look more closely, if he stretch out his hand, and grasp a portion of what is there, and then make a separation with the breath of his mouth as with a purging blast, he will come to distinguish and discern the precious grains which were concealed from him before. And as with that handful on which he has made this experiment, so will it be throughout the whole mass. The chaff indeed first meets the eye, yet among it and beneath it many grains lie hidden; separated, it may be, by intervening chaff from, and not touching, one another; and each one hardly knowing more than itself—yet not therefore to give way to the temptation of believing that it is there alone, of exclaiming with the impatient prophet of old, "I only am left."\*

1 Cor. xv. 22. It is well known that the Universalists

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\* Thus *Enarr. in Ps. xxv*: Grana cum cœperint tritulari, inter paleas jam se non tangunt; ita quasi se non noverunt, quia intercedit palea. Et quicumque longius attendit aream, paleam solam putat; nisi diligentius intueatur, nisi manum porrigat, nisi spiritu oris, id est, flatu purgante discernat, difficile pervenit ad discretionem granorum. Ergo aliquando et ipsa grana ita sunt quasi sejuncta ab invicem, et non se tangentia, ut putet unusquisque cum profecerit, quod solus sit. Hæc cogitatio, fratres, Eliam tentavit, tantum virum. Cf. *Serm. 311. c. 10*: Absit ut de areâ tanti Patris-familias desperem. Qui longe aream videt, solam paleam putat: invenit grana, qui novit inspicere. Ubi te offendit palea, ibi latet granorum massa.

make much of the “*all*” and “*all*” in the words of St. Paul: “For as in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ shall *all* be made alive,” as though the second “*all*” must needs have the same reach as the first; and since the first “*all*” embraces the whole race of men, for there is no one who has not through Adam’s sin come under sentence of natural death, so they conclude the second “*all*” must be as wide-embracing; and that a co-extensive “*all*” will through Christ’s righteousness be partakers of life eternal. But Augustine shows what is the true antithesis between these *alls*; that Paul does but say, “All who die, die in Adam; all who live, live through Christ.” In this respect indeed they are co-extensive, that none die, except as involved in Adam’s sin, none live, except as justified through Christ’s righteousness—in this sense, but no other.\*

1 Cor. xv. 56. “The sting of death is sin.” These words are often understood as though St. Paul would say, That what gives to death its bitterness, and in this way imparts to it its “sting,” is sin and the sense of sin. The words however, as Augustine urges, cohere much more intimately with the apostle’s teaching in regard of death as the fruit and consequence of sin; and their true parallel

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\* *De Civ. Dei*, l. 13. c. 23: Non quia omnes qui in Adam moriuntur, membra erunt Christi; ex illis enim multo plures secundâ in æternum morte plectentur: sed ideo dictum est, *omnes* atque *omnes*, quia sicut nemo corpore animali nisi in Adam moritur, ita nemo corpore spiritali nisi in Christo vivificatur. Cf. *Serm.* 293. § 9; and on Rom. 5. 18, exposed to like abuse, his words, *Ep.* 157. § 13; *Op. Imp. con. Jul.* l. 2. c. 135.

and interpretation is to be found in Rom. v. 12, "Sin entered into the world, and death by sin." Sin is that weapon of mortal temper which kills those that otherwise would have lived for ever. "The sting of death" (κέντρον θανάτου) in fact is equivalent to "the deadly sting," (κέντρον θανάσιμον,) though the personification of death which goes immediately before causes a little difficulty in precisely seizing the force of the words. And exactly in the same way, when the apostle presently before demands, "O death, where is thy sting?" he does not mean, "Where is thy bitterness for him that believes?" He might very fitly have asked this, but yet the exact meaning of this triumphant question is rather, Where is that sin, by which thou didst once exercise such dread and universal dominion over the children of men? It is abolished by the free justification of the sinner, and therefore thou, who art nothing without it, and wouldest not have been at all but for it, shalt, in the kingdom of the Son of God, and for the children of the resurrection, be also abolished.\*

Phil. ii. 12. Augustine's explanation of this passage is directly opposed to that of the modern Romish Church.

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\* *Pecc. Mer. et Rem.* l. 3. c. 11: Aculeus mortis peccatum; aculeus autem quâ mors facta est, non quem mors fecit; peccato enim morimur, non morte peccamus. Sic itaque dictum est, aculeus mortis, quomodo lignum vitæ, non quod hominis vita faceret, sed quo vita hominis fieret. Sic enim dicimus et poculum mortis, quo aliquis mortuus sit vel mori possit, non quod moriens mortuusve confecerit. Aculeus itaque mortis peccatum est, peccati punctu mortificatum est genus humanum. Cf. *Con. duas Epp. Pel.* l. 4. c. 4; *Serm.* 299. § 10.

This, in a necessary consistency with its doctrine that the measure of a man's holiness is the measure of his justification, teaches a continual insecurity on the part of every man concerning his state of grace; and since in no man that holiness can be perfect, it could not teach otherwise; and this passage, with one other from the Old Testament,\* does constant duty in proof; they are the two mainstays of the argument.† Leaving that other passage, which however is utterly misapplied, the present is as little in point. Augustine tells us what "fear" it is which is here urged—not the fear, or rather doubt, whether we be in a state of grace or no, but the fear lest we fall from that state of grace, the *metus vigilantiae*, not the *timor diffidentiae*;‡ or as sometimes with reference to the verse following, and in opposition to the Pelagians, he brings out, the fear of humility. You are to "work out your own salvation;" but you are to do it with an awful sense that it is not your work, but God's work in you and through you; "with fear and trembling," being mindful how awful a thing it is to be brought into immediate contact with "the powers of the world to come," to have God working in you; who may cease working, if you hinder his godly motions, attributing in your pride any part of the work to yourselves; and then, when He ceases, all will be at a stand.§

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\* Eccles. 9. 1, which appears in the Vulgate: *Nescit homo, utrum amore an odio dignus sit.*

† See ESTIUS, *in loc.*, or any other of the Roman Catholic expositors.

‡ *Enarr. in Ps. li*: *Quare cum timore? Quapropter qui se putat stare, videat ne cadat. Quare cum tremore? Intendens te ipsum, ne et tu tenteris.*

§ *Serm. 131. c. 3*: *Depressa implentur, alta siccantur. Gratia*

Phil. ii. 15. Augustine gives rightly the allusion contained in the words here: "Among whom ye shine *as lights in the world*;" namely, that these lights ( $\phi\omega\sigma\tau\eta\rho\epsilon\varsigma$ ) to which the faithful are compared are the heavenly luminaries, and mainly the sun and moon.\* Various other allusions have been traced in the words; some making these "lights" to be *torches*, like which the faithful are to shine in the midst of a dark world; others find these here compared to *lighthouses*, like which they are to guide wanderers over the world's sea; others again find a reference to the golden candlestick in the sanctuary: but all erroneously; the word of the original is never used in the Septuagint or New Testament to signify ought but the heavenly luminaries.†

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pluvia est. Ideo cum timore et tremore, id est, cum humilitate. Noli altum sapere, sed time. Time, ut implearis: noli altum sapere, ne sicceris. *Enarr. in Ps. ciii. 32*: Ideo ergo cum timore, quia Deus operatur. Quia ipse dedit, non ex te est quod habes, cum timore et tremore operaberis; nam si non tremueris eum, auferet quod dedit. Cf. *De Grat. et Lib. Arbit. c. 9*.

\* Thus he brings this passage into connexion with the creation of the fourth day (*Enarr. in Ps. xciii. 1*): Quomodo luminaria in cœlo per diem et per noctem procedunt, peragunt itinera sua, cursus suos certos habent; . . . sic debent sancti, &c.; cf. ver. 23; and *Enarr. in Ps. cxlvii. 4*.

† It is the word employed Gen. i. 14, 16; Eccclus. xliii. 7; Wisd. xiii. 2; and compare Dan. xii. 3, where the redeemed are likened to  $\phi\omega\sigma\tau\eta\rho\epsilon\varsigma\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \omicron\upsilon\rho\alpha\nu\omicron\upsilon$ , and in the only other passage in the N. T. where the word occurs (Rev. xxi. 11)  $\acute{o}\ \phi\omega\sigma\tau\eta\rho\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\eta\varsigma$  is, that which to the heavenly City is in place of sun and moon, see ver. 23. It may be worth while further to note, though this is not his merit, but that of the early Latin translation which he used, that he has the right translation of  $\phi\alpha\acute{\iota}\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\epsilon$ : *apparetis*, and not *lucetis*, which is that

Col. i. 13. It is plain that Augustine would not have been content with resolving "Son of his love" here, as we have done, into "dear Son."\* It indeed includes this, but expresses also something further than this. In his great work, *De Trinitate*, which contains his profoundest speculations on the being and nature of God, and which, though appealing to a more limited circle of readers than most of his writings, may perhaps be considered the loftiest work of his genius, a work which he began a young man and ended an old,† he urges that love being no mere attribute of God, but his essence and substance, "Son of his love" is in fact equivalent with "only begotten." The ὁμοούσιον, not it may be for the conviction of the Arian, but yet most really, is involved in the words; for the "Son of God's love" must in fact share, is in that very phrase declared to share, with Him in his own essential being.‡

Rev. xx. 12. Such language as the giving of the white stone, (Rev. ii. 17,) the standing on the sea of glass,

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of the Vulgate. To justify *lucetis* the word should have been φαίνετε : φαίνειν is to shine; (Gen. i. 17; Exod. xiii. 22; John v. 35; Rev. i. 16; 2 Pet. i. 19;) φαίνεσθαι to appear. (Prov. xxi. 2; Matt. ii. 7; Jam. iv. 14; 1 Pet. iv. 18.)

\* Υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης, as though it were no more than υἱὸς ἀγαπητός.

† *Ep.* 174.

‡ *De Trin.* l. 15. c. 19: Caritas quippe Patris quæ in naturâ ejus est ineffabiliter simplici nihil est aliud quam ejus ipsa natura atque substantia. Ac per hoc Filius caritatis ejus nullus est alius, quam qui de substantiâ ejus est genitus. And presently before, Filius caritatis suæ, Filius substantiæ suæ.



(Rev. xv. 2,) the opening of the books and judging men out of them, and all other in which the things of heaven, not otherwise to be made intelligible to us, are translated into the language of earth, is of course accommodation and condescension, but still with most real truth as its groundwork; and it is the task of the skilful interpreter to bring out the essential truth of which each of these images is the vehicle. This Augustine does very happily, as for instance in his very solemn explanation, quoted below, of what this "opening of the books" at the last day may mean.\*

But I must draw these specimens of Augustine's exegetical skill to an end, which I will do with one or two closing observations. It will be seen, I think, by not a few of these examples, that with all his dialectic dexterity and all his delight in subtlest speculation, which indeed he snuffs afar off, with something of the same exultation as the war-horse in Job "the thunder of the captains and the shouting," plunging into the thickest of it with an eager joy, with all his fondness for tracing up everything to its very ultimate ground,† he abides still the man of the people, uniting in a remarkable degree with his metaphy-

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\* *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 14: Quædam vis est intelligenda divina, quâ fiet ut cuique opera sua, vel bona vel mala, cuncta in memoriam revocentur, et mentis intuitu mirâ celeritate cernantur; ut accuset vel excuset scientia conscientiam, atque ita simul et omnes et singuli judicentur. Quæ nimirum vis divina, libri nomen accepit. In eâ quippe quodam modo legitur quidquid eâ faciente recolitur.

† See, for instance, his interesting discussion on the origin of slavery, *De Civ. Dei*, l. 19. c. 15.



sical subtlety a broad practical common sense; without which union indeed he never could have exercised so wide a dominion as he has. The rich treasure house of common life was open to him. Familiarity and use had not worn out its significance, nor robbed it of its mystery for him. We find him abounding evermore in happiest illustration, the homeliest as the highest, continually appealing in his popular exegesis to proverbs in common use, to familiar turns of language,\* drawing out their lesson from these, tracking those vestiges of the truth which are everywhere dispersed,† and making men's daily life and their most ordinary words and ways to throw light *on* Scripture, to receive light *from* Scripture, and to witness for truths far greater than they dreamed.

It must be acknowledged too that in brief and felicitous antithesis Augustine is without a peer. More than any other Church writer he abounds in short and memorable, and, if I might so call them, epigrammatic sayings, concentrating with a forceful brevity the whole truth which he desires to impart into some single phrase, forging it into a polished shaft, at once pointed to pierce, and barbed that it shall not lightly drop from, the mind and memory. And thus it has come to pass that as no writer lends himself so happily to quotation, none perhaps is so often quoted.‡

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\* As in one place he says himself: *Ipsa lingua popularis plerumque est doctrina salutaris.*

† *Enarr. in Ps. cxviii. 36: Vestigia veritatis, quæ ubique dispersa est.*

‡ The Spaniards have a proverb: *No hay sermon sin Agostino.*

And then with what a genial tact does he know how to plant himself at the central point of the truth which he desires to explain, and from thence securely to unfold it. How often does he in a single phrase sum up the point of some Scripture history or doctrine, draw out and make application of it to the hearts and consciences of men in short and never to be forgotten words; how often does he illuminate as with a flash of lightning some dark passage, or trace with a single word some delicate yet important distinction, which, once traced, can never be confounded again.\* I know not how better I can sum up his excel-

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\* I will instance a few examples of the condensed fulness which is to be often found in his single sentences and phrases. Thus he gathers up in a single phrase the sin of Simon Magus, (Acts viii. 19,) when he desired of the apostles that he too might have like power with them to impart the Holy Ghost: *Voluit talia facere, non talis esse*. Coming on those words of the evangelist, which describe how the whole crowd of the Lord's captors "went backward and fell to the ground," at that word of his, "I am He," (John xviii. 6,) he exclaims: *Quid faciet judicaturus, qui judicandus hoc fecit? Quid regnaturus poterit, qui moriturus hoc potuit?* even as on that earlier trouble of Herod (Matt. ii. 3): *Quid erit tribunal judicantis, cum superbos reges cunæ terrebant infantis?* He gives the purpose of the Lord in suffering himself to be tempted: *Ad hoc pugnat imperator, ut milites discant*. (*Serm.* 123. c. 2.) On the indignation of the ruler of the synagogue at the healing of the woman who had been bowed together (Luke xiii. 14,) he exclaims: *Bene scandalizati sunt de illâ erectâ ipsi curvi*. (*Enarr.* 2<sup>a</sup> in *Ps.* lxxviii. 24.) On the doubt of Thomas in regard of the resurrection of his Lord: *Dubitatio Thomæ, confirmatio Ecclesiæ*; with which we may compare the Church collect for St. Thomas's day. He explains why the Lord, after the resurrection, should have three times over repeated his question to Peter, "Lovest thou me?" (John xxi. 15—17): *Donec*

lencies as an interpreter of Scripture, than in the words of one who on this matter has expressed himself in the following language (*Clausen, Augustinus Sacræ Scripturæ Interpres*, p. 267. *Berol.* 1828): Mira Augustini erat ingenii profunditas, ardens et cordata pietas; ut animum ad ea, quæ intus quæque in sublimi sunt, totum conversum haberet: satis egisse se non prius arbitratus, quam sibi usibusque suis religiosis satisfactum esset, veritates ex sacro idearum fonte elicere, ad interna conscientiæ oracula revocare studio generoso annisus est. Hinc egregiæ multæ interpretationis virtutes ortæ sunt: sollicitudo religiosa,

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trinâ voce amoris solveret trinam vocem negationis. (*Enarr. in Ps.* xxxvii. 13.) The whole question at issue between the Church and the Donatists in regard of the true and the false separation from sinners, he expresses in these words: Fugio paleam ne hoc sim, non aream ne nihil sim. He sets forth the manifold relation of Christ to his Church in regard of prayer (*Enarr. in Ps.* lxxxv. 1): Orat pro nobis, orat in nobis, et oratur a nobis: He prays for us, as our High Priest; He prays in us, as our Head; He is prayed to by us, as our God. With this we may parallelize his exposition of the words, "I am the way, the truth, and the life;" (*John* xiv. 6;) Hoc est, per me venit; ad me pervenit; in me permanet. (*De Doct. Christ.* l. 1.) Again, how profound is his commentary on the words of St. Paul, (*Rom.* xii. 2,) "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your minds, *that ye may prove* what is that good and perfect and acceptable will of God:" Tantum videmus, quantum morimur huic seculo; quantum autem huic vivimus, non videmus. How conscience-searching his remark on the unprofitable servant, who is cast into outer darkness, not because he has *wasted*, but only because he has not multiplied, his Lord's money: Intelligitur pœna intervorsoris ex pœnâ pigri. With what a felicitous analogy he illustrates the fact that regenerate men do not beget regenerate, but natural and needing regeneration (*De Pec. Mer. et Rem.* l. 3. c. 8):

gravitas verecunda, pia sinceritas : quum litteras sacras fidei regulam, lucem pietatis, vitæ magistram positas esse sciret, neque igitur, nisi ad doctrinam et vitam usus redundaret, docto labori laudem pretiumque constare. Et quanta Nostri in vestigiis ad metam hancce dirigendis constantia erat ! quanta in sententiis multis dogmaticis vel ethicis efferendis construendisque diligentia, sagacitas, sapientia verè christiana ! ut non tam argutando dixeris eum intellexisse, quid scripserint auctores sacri, quam, impetu interno ductum, quid senserint, ipsum sensisse ; ita in expositionibus nihil deest, nihil superest, nihil claudicat : cardinem rei acu quasi tetigit feriitque, ut veritate tibi persuasum, pietate te commotum, simplicitate delectatum sentias.

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Palea, quæ opere humano tantâ diligentîâ separatur, manet in fructu qui de purgato tritico nascitur. As again the profound spiritual truth which the Lord declares Matt. x. 39, and elsewhere, is shown to have its truest analogies in the world of nature (*Serm.* 331. c. 1): Agricola triticum si non perdit in semine, non amat in messe. How happily he has seized the central point of the type of the brasen serpent, which they who make that exalted serpent to represent the Lord, and not *the death* of the Lord, in part miss (*In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 13): Quid est serpens exaltatus? Mors Domini in cruce. Adtenditur serpens, ut nihil valeat serpens; adtenditur mors, ut nihil valeat mors. (*Enarr. in Ps.* Lxxiii. 2): Sanari a serpente, magnum sacramentum. Quid est, intuendo serpentem sanari a serpente? Credendo in Mortuum salvari a morte. And on the water and the blood that flowed from the wounded side of the Saviour, and their typical relation to the two sacraments (*Serm.* 311. c. 3): De latere Domini aqua sanguisque profluxit. In uno est mundatio tua, in altero redemptio tua.

EXPOSITION

OF

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.



# EXPOSITION,

ETC.

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## ST. MATTHEW, CHAP. V.

VER. 1, 2. — Augustine does not express himself with very great decision concerning the question, which has always occupied and divided harmonists—namely, whether the Sermon on the Mount, recorded by St. Matthew, is the same as that which St. Luke records. (vi. 20—49.) Against their identity, he finds this to have been spoken on a mountain, that in the plain; (Luke vi. 17;) while yet, on the other hand, the great internal resemblance, and the fact that the same miracle, the healing of the centurion's servant, follows upon both, speak for the identity of the two. He suggests, as a reconciliation of all difficulties, that the Lord may perhaps, first, on some higher eminence of the mountain have spoken the discourse to his disciples which St. Matthew records; and then, coming down to the foot of the mountain, have repeated the same to the multitude, in an abridged form, and one more suitable to them: and that of this repetition we have the record of St. Luke. Yet, before he leaves the question, he allows that this difference, of one discourse having been spoken on a mountain, the other in the plain, does



not imperatively demand such a scheme; which, after all, has in it something unnatural. The two statements are capable of reconciliation: our Lord may have "stood" (Luke vi. 17) on some more level space upon the slope of the mountain, capable of conveniently receiving the multitude, and then, when they were assembled, have sat down, (Matt. v. 1,) and spoken once for all that one discourse which both evangelists relate.\* And this is, no doubt, the truer and more natural explanation; from which the inner differences, as Augustine himself affirms, need move us as little as the outer. One evangelist does not contradict another, when, as St. Luke here, he relates more succinctly what the other had related more at length; or again, when he finds place in his narrative for elements of a discourse, which the other, though reporting other parts of it more fully, has omitted.

There is an emphasis, acknowledged by all later interpreters, in the words, "*He opened his mouth,*" which are not merely another way of saying, He began to teach, but

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\* *De Cons. Evang.* l. 2. c. 19: Quanquam etiam illud possit occurrere, in aliquâ excelsiore parte montis primo cum solis discipulis Dominum fuisse, quando ex eis illos duodecim elegit; deinde cum eis descendisse, non de monte, sed de ipsâ montis celsitudine in campestrum locum, id est, in aliquam æqualitatem quæ in latere montis erat, et multas turbas capere poterat: atque ibi stetisse, donec ad eum turbæ congregarentur; ac postea cum sedisset, accepisse propinquius discipulos ejus, atque ita illis cæterisque turbis præsentibus unum habuisse sermonem, quem Matthæus Lucasque narrarunt, diverso narrandi modo, sed eâdem veritate rerum et sententiarum, quos ambo dixerunt.

signify that He was about commencing a discourse more than commonly weighty and full. (Job iii. 1; xxii. 20; Acts viii. 35; x. 34.) Augustine has not let this go unobserved, although he finds exclusively an indication of *the length* of the discourse which is introduced with this preface, and not also of its weight and solemnity.\* Yet in truth, when his words, who is Himself The Word and the Wisdom of God, are recorded, where there is that, these must of necessity be there also.

Ver. 3. "*Blessed are the poor in spirit.*"—In these words, the first in the Sermon, a difficult question is already stirred; in what sense, namely, "*in spirit*" shall be taken. Augustine explains it, poor in their own spirits, and so rich in the Spirit of God, who are thus as the valleys, filled with the waters which roll off from the high and the barren hills.† Yet while this is no doubt, in the main, the true meaning of Christ's saying, he lays on the words "*in spirit*," not exactly their right stress; he would have it, Blessed are they that have not an elated spirit; taking "*spirit*" altogether in an evil sense,‡ as

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 1: Ista circumlocutio quâ scribitur, Et aperiens os suum, fortassis ipsâ morâ commendat aliquanto longiorem futurum esse sermonem.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* cxli. 4: Beati pauperes spiritu suo, divites Spiritu Dei. Omnis enim homo qui spiritum suum sequitur, superbus est. Subdat spiritum suum, ut capiat Spiritum Dei. Ibat in culmen, residat in valle. Si ierit in culmen, denatat ab illo aqua, si in valle resederit, implebitur ex eâ.

‡ Thus *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 1: Non habentes inflantem spiritum, and *Enarr. in Ps.* cxliii. 7; see also the preceding note.

that in man which lifts itself up against God, and so hinders the reception of any of his gifts or blessings. But what our Lord would say is doubtless this, Blessed are they that are poor in the spirit of their minds; the term "*poor*" being alone that which is to exclude the false riches of pride and self-sufficiency, and the words that follow, "*in spirit*," marking that it is the region of the inner man in which his thoughts are moving; that he is not now speaking of worldly riches or worldly poverty, not of the things which are outside of a man, but of that which is within. It is as much as to say, Blessed are they that are inwardly poor, who in their hearts and spirits have a sense of need, of emptiness, and poverty.

His explanation, it will be seen, though capable of winning slightly in accuracy, yet effectually excludes the Romish interpretation, that it is any outward poverty or riches of which Christ is speaking, that he is fore-announcing here any mendicant orders, or any singular beatitudes which should be theirs.\* Augustine had far too deep an insight into Christian truth to limit and explain Christ's saying here by the other form in which St. Luke records it, "Blessed be ye poor;" on the contrary, he evermore interprets that by this, completing the briefer by the fuller, not cutting down (which were absurd) the fuller to suit with the briefer. For he that was a

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\* Many Romish interpreters make *πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι*, the *voluntarily* poor.

faithful monitor, (and none more faithful,) to the rich of this world, warning them of the dangers that especially were theirs, hardness of heart, self-indulgence, pride, and notably the last,—for as every fruit has its worm, so wealth has this,\*—was as faithful also to the poor, did not fall into the temptation, which is equally a temptation, of flattering or favouring them, (Lev. xix. 15,) and therefore would not let them believe that their outward poverty did itself constitute humility, however it might be a help to it, or that they were necessarily poor in spirit because poor in this world. He often tells them they were not to take for granted that every beggar was a Lazarus;† while on the other side there were Jobs and Abrahams, who were adorned with this true poverty, even in the

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\* *Serm.* 61. c. 9: Omne pomum, omne granum, omne frumentum, omne lignum, habet vermem suum. Vermis divitiarum, superbia.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* cxxxi. 15: Pauper Dei in animo est, non in sacco. Proceedit aliquando homo habens plenam domum, uberes terras; . . . novit quia in ipsis non est presumendum; humiliat se Deo, facit inde bene; ita cor ipsius erigitur ad Deum, ut noverit quia non solum nihil illi prosunt divitiæ ipsæ, sed et impediunt pedes ipsius, nisi Ille regat et Ille subveniat: et numeratur inter pauperes, qui saturantur panibus. Invenis alium mendicum inflatum, aut ideo non inflatum, quia nihil habet, quærentem tamen unde infletur. Non attendit Deus facultatem, sed cupiditatem; et judicat eum secundum cupiditatem, quia inhiat rebus temporalibus, non secundum facultatem, quam non ei contigit adipisci. And *Enarr. in Ps.* lxxxv. 1: Resistit Deus superbis, et holosericatis et pannosis: humilibus autem dat gratiam, et habentibus aliquam substantiam hujus seculi et non habentibus. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps.* xciii. 1; and *Serm.* 177, where he seeks especially to bring out the force of St. Paul's words: Qui volunt divites fieri. 1 Tim. vi. 5.

midst of their worldly abundance.\*—This poverty of spirit being the condition of every blessing, therefore to it is attached the promise of “*the kingdom of heaven*,” which is inclusive of all blessings; for all the beatitudes which follow are but, as he observes, the unfolding of this first one. On the phrase itself, “*kingdom of heaven*,” so often recurring in St. Matthew, (in the other New Testament Scriptures, “*kingdom of God*,” as sometimes with him,) he notes how it belongs exclusively to the New Covenant; that while all else was in the old, even life eternal, and the resurrection of the dead, yet this name was not there, but would appear reserved for his lips who should be a King to rule, and a Priest to sanctify, his people.†

Ver. 4. “*Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth*.”—Augustine shares with the Vulgate the better arrangement of the beatitudes which places this immediately after the first, reversing the position of this and of the “*Blessed are they that mourn*,” which in our Bibles has precedence of it, but which, for the truer logical

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. lxxi. 2*: Quâ paupertate etiam beatus Job pauper fuit, et antequam magnas illas terrenas divitias amisisset. Quod ideo commemorandum putavi, quoniam sunt quidam qui facilius omnia sua pauperibus distribuunt, quam ipsi pauperes Dei fiant.

† *Con. Faust. l. 19. c. 31*: Regnum cœlorum . . . ori ejus nominandum servabatur, quem Regem ad regendos et Sacerdotem ad sanctificandos fideles suos universus ille apparatus veteris Instrumenti in generationibus, factis, dictis, sacrificiis, observationibus, festivitibus, omnibusque eloquiorum præconiis, et rebus gestis et rerum figuris parturiebat esse venturum.

coherence, should follow.\* He rightly explains this meekness as having reference to our bearing, not toward God, but our fellow-men.† And then comes out the appropriateness of the blessing; for it seems, according to the judgment of men, that in a world of wrong and unrighteousness and violence, the meek man will surely make himself a prey; that sooner or later he will be thrust out from all; that an Isaac, who will rather give up the well again and again than contend for it, will at length have nothing left him which he may call his own. (Gen. xxvi. 20.) But it is not so. Great under God is the strength and power of meekness; with it is ever the victory at the last: in the words of the eastern proverb, “The one staff of Moses breaks in shivers at last the ten thousand spears of Pharaoh.” These “*meek*” shall in the end inherit all things, even this “*earth*,” from which it seemed once as if they would be thrust out altogether.‡ Here, too,

\* Lachmann and Tischendorf have admitted this arrangement into their text.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 2: Mites sunt qui cedunt improbitatibus et non resistunt malo, sed vincunt in bono malum.

‡ *Serm.* 53. c. 8: He observes how in each, congrua congruentibus apposita sint; and on this; Quia mites homines facile excluduntur de terrâ suâ, Beati, inquit, mites, quoniam ipsi hæreditate possidebunt terram. It shall be theirs, not merely as a future benefit, but a present, according to those profound words of his (*Ep.* 153. c. 6): Omne quod male possidetur, alienum est: male autem possidet, qui male utitur: and again (*Ibid.*): Fidelis hominis totus mundus divitiarum est: infidelis autem nec obolus. So that he does not in fact contradict that meaning which looks at it as a future inheritance, when (*Ep.* 149) he explains “*the earth*” spoken of here

we have one of Augustine's striking antithetic sayings: "Thou wishest to possess the earth: beware then lest thou be possessed by it."\*—There is a force, which I think he intended to bring out, in the form under which the promise is conveyed, "*For they shall inherit the earth,*"—and that in more ways than one; "*the earth,*" possession in land always remaining the surest of earthly possessions,—and "*inherit,*" possession by inheritance in the orderly succession of father and son being ever counted to have the strongest promise and pledge of endurance.†

Ver. 5. "*Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.*"—There is, he often takes occasion to remark, a mourning which has no blessing attached to it; there is misery enough among men, which yet has no blessing, for it leads to no repentance, or at best is only a "sorrow of this world." One is groaning for one thing, one for another—for this temporal loss, for that worldly tribulation; for the hail that has laid waste his vineyard, for the death that has entered into his dwelling, for the powerful foes that are seeking his harm: and if perchance the groaning of the faithful reaches to the ears of the world,

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as, Ecclesiam hæreditatemque fidelium atque sanctorum, quæ dicitur terra viventium.

\* *Serm.* 53. c. 2: Vis possidere terram? vide ne possidearis a terrâ.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 2: Significat quandam soliditatem et stabilitatem hæreditatis perpetuæ.



the world lays his sorrowing to the same account. Men say he has suffered this loss or that; for they know not of a mourning which springs from a higher source, a mourning for our own sins, for the sins of others, out of a sense of our exile here, of our separation from the true home of our spirits, out of a longing for the eternal Sabbath.\* And yet it is only this nobler grief that has the promise linked to it, this only which will be followed by consolation. To be thus miserable is indeed to be happy, while, on the contrary, he that is altogether without this mourning gives too sure an augury that there is reserved for him a mourning of another kind, and which shall not exchange itself, as shall this, for the consolations of the kingdom of heaven.†

Ver. 6. "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled.*"—It is not that the hunger and thirst are in themselves the blessing, but only as they prepare the way for its reception, create a

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\* See a beautiful passage (*Enarr. in Ps. xxxvii. 9*) on the groaning which is before the Lord, compared with that which is only before men.

† *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvii. 1.* Felix est qui sic miser est; . . . immo miser esset si lugens non esset: and again (*Enarr. in Ps. cxlviii. 1*): Qui non gemit peregrinus, non gaudebit civis. *Ep. 248*: Pia est ista tristitia, et, si dici potest, beata miseria, vitiis alienis tribulari, non implicari; mœrere, non hærere; dolore contrahi, non amore attrahi. Hæc est persecutio quam patiuntur omnes qui volunt in Christo pie vivere, secundum apostolicam mordacem veracemque sententiam (2 Tim. iii. 12). Quid enim hic sic persequitur vitam bonorum, quam vita iniquorum?

longing for the heavenly aliment, which except for this hunger would be slighted or loathed.\* Very beautifully Augustine draws from John vi. 26—65 a commentary on this text, making the “*righteousness*” here to be equivalent with the “bread from heaven” there, and urging that by each we should understand nothing short of Christ himself. This is at once evident with regard to the “bread from heaven,” and he quotes the words of St. Paul (1 Cor. i. 30,) “Christ Jesus . . . made unto us righteousness,” in proof that “*righteousness*” here is equally exchangeable for Him in whom the righteousness is contained; the hungering and thirsting after which is no desiring merely a moral amelioration, but a longing after Christ, and the being clothed with *his* righteousness, and satisfied out of his fulness.† The Jews, he says, were in the condition of mind directly opposed to that which here has the blessing attached to it, when, going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit themselves to the righteousness of God; (Rom. x. 3;) as no less were those who disputed with the Lord concerning the bread of God which came down from heaven, (John vi.,) which He would have given them, but which they scornfully put back: for they had not the spiritual hunger, the sense of emptiness, which alone would have interpreted his words, or given a

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\* *Serm.* 61. c. 6: Præcedat saturitatem fames, ne fastidium non perveniat ad panes.

† Thus, too, he exchanges with a true feeling of the sense, “*righteousness*” for “God,” in some allusions to this passage; *Enarr. in Ps.* cxlv. 18.

value to his offer.\* Augustine cannot find the entire fulfilment of the appended promise, "*for they shall be filled,*" in the present life; for here our jaws are but sprinkled, as it were, with a few drops from that river of joy, whereof then we shall drink to the full: yet the longing now is the condition of the satisfying of the longing hereafter; and the more longing, the ampler satisfaction, for this longing is itself the dilating of the vessel that it may contain the more.†

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\* *In Ev. Joh. Tract. 26*: Isti a pane de cœlo longe erant, nec eum esurire noverant. Fauces cordis languidas habebant . . . Panis quippe iste interioris hominis quærit esuriem: unde alio loco dicit, Beati qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam, quoniam ipsi saturabuntur. Justitiam vero nobis esse Christum, Paulus Apostolus dicit. Ac per hoc qui esurit hunc panem, esuriat justitiam; sed justitiam quæ de cœlo descendit, justitiam quam dat Deus, non quam sibi facit homo. And then he justly explains the "righteousness of God," (Rom. i. 17,) not as the righteousness with which God is righteous in himself, but the righteousness which He gives to his people.

† *De Util. Jejun. c. 1*: Pertinet ergo ad homines hanc vitam mortalem gerentes, esurire ac sitire justitiam: impleri autem justitiâ, ad aliam vitam pertinet. Hoc pane, hoc cibo pleni sunt Angeli: homines autem dum esuriunt, extendunt se; dum se extendunt, dilatantur; dum dilatantur, capaces fiunt; capaces facti, suo tempore replebuntur. Quid ergo, hic nihil inde capiunt qui esuriunt et sitiunt justitiam? Capiunt plane, sed aliud est cum quærimus de refectione iter agentium, et aliud cum quærimus de perfectione beatorum. And *Enarr. in Ps. cxxii. 4*: Quantacumque justitia in nobis fuerit, ros est nescio quis ad illum fontem, ad saginam illam tantam stillicidia quædam sunt, quæ vitam nostram molliant, et duram iniquitatem solvant. *Enarr. in Ps. xxxv. 10*: Quis est fons vitæ nisi Christus? Venit ad te in carne, ut irroraret fauces tuas sitientes; satiabit sperantem, qui irroravit sitientem.

Ver. 7. "*Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.*"—This mercifulness Augustine would appear sometimes to confine to the relief of the temporal needs of our brother; yet is it a pitifulness which is evidently of a wider reach, embracing the whole outcomings of a Christian's heart, whether in inward sympathies or outward acts, in relation to the sorrows and sufferings of his brethren. And here the blessed retaliations of the kingdom of God shall find place; upon which he expresses himself thus: "Do, and it shall be done. Do with another, that it may be done with thee: for thou aboundest, and thou lackest. Thou aboundest in things temporal, thou lackest things eternal. A beggar is at thy gate, thou art thyself a beggar at God's gate. Thou art sought, and thou seekest. As thou dealest with *thy* seeker, even so God will deal with his. Thou art both empty and full. Fill thou the empty out of thy fulness, that out of the fulness of God thine emptiness may be filled." \*

Ver. 8. "*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*"—The "*pure heart*" Augustine explains, and rightly as I believe, as the single heart, the heart without folds; and this, with the promise of seeing God which is attached to it, causes him to bring this passage at once into connexion with those others in which our Lord speaks of the single eye, that eye of the soul, (Matt. vi. 22, 23;

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\* *Serm.* 53. c. 5.

Luke xi. 34,) which only when healthy is receptive of divine light, and the channel of light to the whole man; a declaration identical with the present, that only the pure in heart shall see God.\* But *how* this seeing of God should be,—for he will not explain away the words into a mere figure of a general felicity,—is a question which occupied him greatly; yet one, as he truly said at the beginning of a long epistle on the subject, in which holy living will help infinitely more than subtle teaching.† And as this question occupied him, so did another which is nearly connected with it, namely, *when* this should be? a question which must mainly depend for its answer on the answer given to the first. *What* the seeing of God is must decide *when* it shall be, whether in this life or in the life to come? or whether, like so many other promises, it shall have a partial fulfilment now, an entire fulfilment hereafter? To arrive at a satisfactory answer it will be needful to put together, from his different writings, the results which he comes to upon these points. He most truly takes his first stand upon this; that the seeing of God at all involves, and itself rests upon, the divine consti-

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\* Beati mundicordes, as he commonly expresses it with a word of his own. The Vulgate, Beati mundo corde;—mundum cor=simplex (i. e. sine plicâ) cor=ὁρθαλμός ἀπλοῦς (Luke xi. 34.) Perhaps *sincerus* would be nearer to the Greek καθαρός, since they both rest on the image of immunity from foreign admixtures—this of colours, that (according at least to one etymology, sine cerâ) of honey from the wax that would impair its perfect purity.

† Ep. 147: Primum mihi videtur plus valere in hac inquisitione vivendi quam loquendi modum.

tution of man, his original creation in the divine image; and hence, to use an image of the later Platonists, as because the eye is soliform (ἡλιοειδής), it therefore can see the sun, so man, being made in a divine image, is therefore capable of knowing and seeing God.\* But St. Paul tells us what was this image of God in which man was first created—not outward but inward—“created after God in righteousness and true holiness.” (Ephes. iv. 24.) The seeing then which rests upon this must be an inward seeing; not, as some said, whom he earnestly rebukes, with these eyes of flesh, but it must be through the restoration of the effaced likeness of God in the soul that the forfeited capacity of seeing Him must be restored. The enlightened eyes of the understanding, the heart purified by faith—these, and no bodily eyes, are the organs by which God is seen. In proportion as we are unlike to Him, we are incapable of seeing Him; in proportion as we grow in likeness to Him, as we are “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created” us, we grow in the power of this vision.†

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\* *Serm.* 88. c. 6: Fecit autem te Deus, o homo, ad imaginem suam. Daretne tibi unde videres solem quem fecit, et non tibi daret unde videres eum qui te fecit, cum te ad imaginem suam fecerit?

† Thus *Ep.* 92. c. 3, (with allusion to 1 John v. 2): In tantum ergo videbimus, in quantum similes ei erimus, quia nunc in tantum non videmus, in quantum dissimiles sumus. Inde igitur videbimus, unde similes erimus. Quis autem dementissimus dixerit, corpore nos vel esse vel futuros esse similes Deo? The whole epistle is directed against those who thought the corporeal eye would be the organ with which God would be seen; yet elsewhere (*Ep.* 111;



Here, then, is the answer to the other question: *When* it shall be, in this life, or in the coming? Plainly in both. For, since this renewal is begun here, the vision must begin here also; though it be now but a seeing through a glass darkly: while its consummation will be there, where it will be face to face. For this most earnestly he affirms, that it will be a seeing which shall be intuitive and immediate, a seeing “Him as He is;” no mere theophany, such as were the appearances of God to the saints in the Old Testament, no taking of a form in which to make Himself apparent to men; but a revelation of God in his own most proper nature, from which will follow a seeing Him *as He is*. This was denied to Moses once; no man, while yet flesh and blood, could so see God and live, (Exod. xxxiii. 20,) but it shall be granted to him and to all the faithful in the world to come. And here, Augustine observes, is the reconciliation of those passages, some of which say, that “no man hath seen God at any time” (John i. 18), that no man hath seen Him, nor can see; (1 Tim. vi. 16;) while others speak of men being introduced into his presence, seeing Him, and speaking with Him. (Gen. xviii. 1; Isai. vi. 1.)\* It is to the attaining of this pure heart,

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and *De Civ. Dei*, l. 22. c. 29) he expresses himself more doubtfully, as being unable to say what accessions of power the spiritual body may receive.

\* See his beautiful letter to Paulina, *Ep.* 147. c. 6—8: Ipse ergo erat in eâ specie quâ apparere voluerat, non autem ipse apparebat in naturâ propriâ, quam Moses videre cupiebat. Ea quippe promittitur sanctis in aliâ vitâ . . . Multi viderunt, sed quod voluntas elegit, non quod natura formavit.



this purged eye of the soul, that all helps and appliances of grace are tending.\* This is the great meaning and purpose of them all,—of sacraments, of preaching, of Scripture,—to prepare and fit us for this, for a time when we shall be enabled to see the Seer:† for in that seeing all blessedness is included; without it there were no heaven, with it there could be no hell.‡

Ver. 9. “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.*”—Augustine sometimes understands by “*peacemakers*” those that have made peace in their own inner souls, in whom the spirit is ruling and the flesh serving; who, submitting themselves to God, are able to submit their lower nature to themselves; who thus being content to be ruled, are able in their turn to rule:§ but generally he takes a wider range, for this is evidently too narrow. It is true that the Latin *pacifici*,|| which he

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\* *Serm.* 88. c. 5: Tota igitur opera nostra, fratres, in hâc vitâ est, sanare oculum cordis unde videtur Deus. Ad hoc sacrosancta mysteria celebrantur, ad hoc sermo Dei prædicatur, ad hoc agunt quidquid agunt divinæ sanctæque literæ, ut purgetur illud interius ab eâ re quæ nos impedit ab aspectu Dei. In this and the following chapters is much more that is admirable on the purging the inward eye.

† Videre Videntem.

‡ Visio Dei est tota vita æterna. Si mali Dei faciem viderent, pœnis caderent.

§ So *De Serm. Dom in Mon.* l. 1. c. 2.

|| *Pacifici*=*εἰρηνικοί*, (*βουλόμενοι εἰρήνην*, Prov. xii. 20,) as opposed to those who are *ἐξ ἐριθείας*, (Rom. ii. 8;) but the word here is *εἰρηνοποιοί*.

has in common with the Vulgate, and which is rather “the peaceable” than “*the peacemakers*,” encourages a narrower view; as indeed it confounds in a great measure this beatitude with the second, for the “*meek*” and the “peaceable” will be nearly the same. But the naming of the “*peacemakers*” introduces a new thought. The Christian is not merely himself quiet in the land, quiet in his own heart, but he is a spreader of peace around him—the peace of this world, but more than this, the peace also of God; knowing the blessedness of that peace himself, he says also by word and deed to his brethren, “Be ye reconciled with God.”\* Too many expositors look exclusively to that other and lower peace, those especially who prize Christianity merely for its power of healing the outward sores of the world, not as that which alone stanches the deep inner wounds of men’s souls. Not that the peace of this world is excluded;† the Gospel does bring this peace, but only by the way: it is aiming at a higher peace, and one for the sake of which, as being the only true peace, it is willing for a season to forego and sacrifice the other, to be called a troubler, to appear to be bringing in the sword of division, rather than to be knitting the bands of love. Thus it is, he observes, with

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\* Thus Augustine, with allusion to Luke x. 5: Quo pleni sunt, fundunt.

† Thus Augustine himself, writing to a soldier, says (*Ep.* 189, *ad Bonifac.*): Esto ergo etiam bellando pacificus, ut eos quos expugnas ad pacis utilitatem vincendo perducas. Beati enim pacifici, ait Dominus.

the truth of Christ even in the individual man ; for in one sense in the redeemed man there is not peace but war—a war which this very redemption has brought in : in him the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh ; yet thus is he in the way to that peace, which alone deserves the name. And so also must it be in a sinful world. (2 Tim. iv. 2.)\*

Ver. 10—12.—Augustine oftentimes very graphically describes the new forms which persecution assumes, remaining in its essence the same, when now it is no longer the persecution which heathens direct against Christians, but that which bad Christians direct against good ; and we learn from him by the way some of the forms which in his time the scoffings of the ungodly against the earnest assumed.† But further, he has need frequently to urge that it is, according to the Lord's own express limitation, a suffering "*for righteousness' sake*," and that alone, which has the blessing ; that it is in fact the cause which makes the martyr. This he had need to affirm against the Donatists, who because they were suffering, on account of their schism, many things at the hands of the civil power, therefore claimed without further question this blessing as their own ; and appealed to these sufferings of theirs in proof of the righteousness of their cause. Now, not to

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\* *Con. Lit. Petil.* l. 2. c. 69.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* xc. 3 : Dicunt, Magnus tu, justus, tu es Elias, tu es Petrus, de cœlo venisti.

say that many of their sufferings were self-inflicted,\* many the just punishment of civil crimes, even those which they bore for their faith's sake gave them no right to assume this, till another question had been settled in their favour. For, without in the least seeking to justify all the means which the temporal power used, and Augustine, with the rest of the Church in Africa, sanctioned and approved, for the forcible reducing of them to unity, in this he had plainly right, when he entirely denied their claim, merely on the strength of these sufferings, to be the rightful inheritors of this blessing.† Another point had first to be proved, namely, that it was for Christ's sake, as witnesses for Christ's truth, and as the true representatives of

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\* *Con. Gaudent.* l. 1. c. 28: Genus hominum . . . crudelissimum in mortibus alienis, vilissimum in suis. See the almost incredible details of this fury of self-destruction which possessed them, in his letter to Count Boniface. (*Ep.* 185, c. 3.) Yet the actual facts do not altogether bear him out, when of one of them he asks (*Con. Gaudent.* l. 1. c. 21,) Quam persecutionem patimini, nisi a vobis?

† Thus Gaudentius, a Donatist, writes: Nostram caussam solæ nobis istæ persecutiones gravissimam reddunt, and proceeds to quote Matt. v. 10—12; Augustine replies (*Con. Gaudent.* l. 1. c. 20): Recte ista dicerentur a vobis quærentibus martyrum gloriam, si haberetis martyrum caussam. Non enim felices ait Dominus, qui mala ista patiuntur, sed qui propter filium hominis patiuntur, qui est Christus Jesus. Vos autem non propter ipsum patimini, sed contra ipsum. And again: Non ex passione certa justitia, sed ex justitiâ passio gloriosa est. Ideoque Dominus . . . non generaliter ait, Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur, sed addit magnam differentiam quâ vera a sacrilegio pietas secernatur. Ait enim, Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur propter justitiam. Cf. *Con. Lit. Petil.* l. 2. c. 71; *Con. Crescon.* l. 4. c. 46; *Ep.* 44. c. 2, 4.

Christ's body, that they suffered what they did. They could not, in arguing with the Catholics, who entirely denied this, bring these sufferings in proof that they, because they suffered these things, were the true body of Christ. Else by the same proofs, as he keenly retorts, the priests of Baal were martyrs, when Elijah slew them; and as regards the cross, the malefactors had that in common with the Lord.\* If they found in these persecutions the evidence that they were Christ's Church, by the same right the pagans who still survived in the Roman empire might appeal to the forbidding of their worship, the closing of their temples, the pains and penalties which attended the adherence to their superstition, as evidences of its truth. Once grant that sufferings of themselves constituted martyrs, and every mine would be full of them; no criminal who perished by the sword of justice but would be the rightful claimant of a crown.†

“*For great is your reward in heaven.*” Augustine often

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\* *Ep.* 185. c. 2: Et ipse Dominus cum latronibus crucifixus est, sed quos passio jungebat, caussa separabat. Cf. *Serm.* 331. c. 3.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxiv. 23: Martyres non facit pœna, sed caussa. Nam si pœna martyres faceret, omnia metalla martyribus plena essent, omnes catenæ martyres traherent; omnes qui gladio feriuntur, coronarentur. Nemo ergo dicat, Quia patior justus sum. Quia ipse qui primo passus est, pro justitiâ passus est, ideo magnam exceptionem addidit, Beati qui persecutionem patiuntur *propter justitiam*. . . . Nemo ergo dicat, Persecutionem patior; non ventilet pœnam, sed probet caussam. *Enarr. in Ps.* cxlv. 7: Quidquid jure pateris, non est injuria. Latrones multa patiuntur, sed non injuriam. Scelerati, malefici, effractores, adulteri, corruptores, omnes patiuntur multa mala, sed nulla est injuria. Cf. *Con. Lit. Petil.* l. 2. c. 19.

enlarges on the sustaining power of Christian hope, and of an eye directed to this great reward.\* But on this word "*reward*" he is very distinct, and carefully guards against all claims which, on the strength of it, the proud heart of man might make. The "*reward in heaven*" does, indeed, bear a relation to that which is done or suffered for Christ's sake on earth, yet is it a relation of grace, and not of debt. God has chosen, and of his own free will and unmerited bounty appointed, that there should be such a relation, and now "He is faithful that promised." The doctrine of preventing grace, legitimately carried out, must for ever exclude the notion of any claim, as of merit properly so called; not that there are not merits, or rather graces, which will hereafter be recognised, but that these merits are themselves gifts of God,† so that eternal life will be but the adding of one more, one crowning gift, to all that preceded.‡ It will be but "grace for grace."§

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. xxxvi. 23*: Attende mercedem, si vis sustinere laborem.

† *Ep. 194*: Ipsa vita æterna gratia nuncupatur, nec ideo quia non meritis datur, sed quia data sunt et ipsa merita quibus datur. And again (*De Grat. et Lib. Arb. c. 8*): Si vita bona nostra nihil aliud est quam Dei gratia, sine dubio et vita æterna, quæ bonæ vitæ redditur, Dei gratia est; et ipsa enim gratis datur, quia gratis data est illa, cui datur.

‡ *Ep. 194*: Cum Deus coronat merita nostra, nihil aliud coronat, quam munera sua. *Enarr. in Ps. Lxx*: Tua peccata sunt, merita Dei sunt. Supplicium tibi debetur, et cum præmium venerit, sua dona coronabit, non merita tua. See too his anti-Pelagian treatises, *passim*.

§ *Ep. 194*: Nunc vero de plenitudine ejus accepimus non solum



Ver. 3—12.—As regards the contemplation of the heptad of beatitudes no longer singly, but as a whole, Augustine suggests, that perhaps they may stand in some relation to the sevenfold operation of the Holy Spirit of which Isaiah (ch. xi.) speaks; though it can hardly be said that he very successfully traces the relation of each to each. He notes how the eighth beatitude returns upon the first, having the same promise, “*the kingdom of heaven*,”\* which, in the intermediate ones, has not been forsaken, for that one comprehends all the others, but has been broken up, or rather contemplated successively in its various aspects; and how this return indicates that now the perfect and complete man has on all his sides been declared.† For these, as he says most truly, are not different persons that will be differently blest; it is not that one, being pure in heart, will see God; another, being

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gratiam quâ nunc juste in laboribus usque ad finem vivimus, sed etiam gratiam pro hâc gratia, ut in requie postea sine fine vivamus. Augustine has here given the hint, at least, of the right explanation, which so many even now miss, of that difficult *χάριν ἀντὶ χάριτος*, (John, i. 16,) that it means one grace heaped upon, and as a better grace coming in some sort *in the room of* (*ἀντὶ*) a preceding; (so Theognis, *ἀντ’ ἀνιῶν ἀνίας*, troubles upon troubles.) It is scarcely, however, probable that St. John meant, as he implies, by the first *χάρις*, the grace of this life, and by the second, the grace of eternal life, but, rather by the two together, the uninterrupted stream of God’s gifts in Christ, which are ever succeeding, and, so to speak, *replacing* one another.

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. l. c. 4; and *Serm.* 348.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. l. c. 3: Octava tanquam ad caput redit; quia consummatum perfectumque ostendit et probat.



merciful, will obtain mercy ; and a third, that, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, will be filled. But these are different sides of the same Christian character, with the capacities of blessedness which are linked to each ; so that, while it is true that, because the man is “*pure in heart*,” and not because he is “*merciful*,” or “*meek*,” or a “*peacemaker*,” he will “*see God* ;” and again, because he is “*merciful*,” and not because he is “*pure in heart*,” that he will “*obtain mercy*,” and so with the rest, yet it is the same person throughout to whom all the promises belong. Just as, were it said, “Happy are they that have feet, for they can walk ; happy are they that have tongues, for they can speak ;” we should not think of one man having a tongue, another feet, but only to each limb attribute its appropriate function.\* It is true, indeed, that these graces, like grapes of the same cluster, may ripen some earlier than others, may be some of them finer and fuller than others, yet do they not the less all hang upon the same stalk ; and the same process of ripening is going forward in them all. He might have added, perhaps, that in these separated blessings there is an implicit summons to seek to complete the Christian character in all its aspects, to polish the diamond on all its sides, that

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\* *Serm.* 53. c. 9. Sic tanquam spiritalia membra componens, docuit quid ad quid pertineat. Aptā est humilitas ad habendum regnum cœlorum, apta mansuetudo ad possidendam terram, aptus luctus ad consolationem, apta fames et sitis justitiæ ad saturitatem, apta misericordia ad impetrandam misericordiam, aptum mundum cor ad videndum Deum.

so on every side it may be capable of reflecting that light of heaven which will on that side also fall upon it.

Ver. 13. "*Ye are the salt of the earth.*"—The transition from what went before is easy: "*Ye are the salt;*" as such intended to communicate a savour of life unto others; to hinder the world from becoming a putrefying mass of corruption. Beware then lest you yourselves, through fear of worldly incommunities and persecutions, lose this your seasoning power, for there are none other to impart grace to you, since it is you that are appointed to diffuse it to the rest of the world.\* And the salt which has thus "*lost his savour,*"† what will it be good for, "*but to be cast out and to be trodden under foot of men*"? Augustine makes here the beautiful observation, that they are not truly thus "*trodden under foot,*" who suffer persecution without shrinking, but they who through fear of persecution become vile, abandoning their faith; for however

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 6: Si vos per quos condiendi sunt quodammodo populi, metu persecutionum temporalium amiseritis regna cœlorum, qui erunt homines per quos a vobis error auferatur, cum vos elegerit Deus, per quos errorem auferat cœterorum?

† Here, as there is occasion not unfrequently to notice, the earlier Latin translation which Augustine uses has a better term than that substituted in the Vulgate. In the latter, *μωρανθῆναι* is rendered *evanuerit*, which is not indeed incorrect, as Tholuck (*Ausleg. d. Bergpredigt*, p. 121) asserts, for we have in Cicero, *Salsamenta vetustate evanescunt*: but the old *infatuerit* was singularly happy *fatuus* = *μωρός*, the man saltless, insipid. We have no such happy word for it as the French *fade*.

undermost he may *seem*, yet he is not really so, who, whatever he may be suffering below on earth, has his heart fixed above in heaven.\*

Ver. 14, 15. "*Ye are the light of the world.*"—They are light, yet not in themselves, but "light in the Lord;" rays darted forth from the sun, but not the sun itself. In themselves, even as all others, they were "sometimes darkness," (Ephes. v. 8,) and, receding from the true light, would become darkness again. For no man is a true light, having light in himself, but is as a candle or a lamp, which has been kindled and may be quenched again; having ever need to exclaim with the Psalmist, "The Lord is my light." † — "*A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.*" By this "*hill*" Augustine understands Christ himself, the foundation upon which the Church is built, the stone cut out without hands, which growing into a mountain fills the world. ‡ Yet the Lord may perhaps mean no more than that the Church can no more escape

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 6: Non itaque calcatur ab hominibus, qui patitur persecutionem, sed qui persecutionem timendo infatuatur. Calcare enim non potest nisi inferior, sed inferior non est qui quamvis corpore multa in terrâ sustineat, corde tamen fixus in cælo est.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* cxviii. 105: Nulla quippe creatura, quamvis rationalis et intellectuallis, a seipsâ illuminatur, sed participatione sempiternæ veritatis accenditur.

‡ *Serm.* 338. c. 1: Ipse est mons, qui ex parvo lapide crevit, et totum orbem crescendo implevit. And *Con. Faust.* l. 16. c. 17: Se scilicet montem, fideles autem suos in sui nominis gloriâ fundatos asserens civitatem.

the notice of the world, than a city set on an eminence the eyes of men—"Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light to all that are in the house." To find, as Augustine does, in this "*bushel*" a particular allusion to worldly cares, or worldly lusts, which we may not suffer to darken the light of the spirit, putting that uppermost which ought to be undermost, and *vice versâ*, certainly seems far-fetched.\* What the Lord would say is but generally this: You were not given such great gifts, to let them rust in idleness. It is a statement at once of God's intention concerning them, and a warning that they do not defeat that intention. That salt which is yours was intended to season, see then that it grows not savourless; this city to be visible, beware lest it lose the power of drawing men's eyes to it. This light which is kindled in you was meant to shine and to give light to all that are in the house, that is, in the Church, or, as he rather inclines to interpret it, in the world; see then that you suffer not this light to be darkened in you; it was imparted for a very different end.

Ver. 16.—There will be an opportunity of entering into

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 6: And yet it is impossible to deny the beauty of his further explanation of this passage, where concerning the candlestick on which the candle is to be set he says (*Serm.* 296. c. 6): *Crux Christi est magnum candelabrum. Qui vult lucere, non erubescat de ligneo candelabro. . . . Audi ergo Paulum Apostolum, audi lucernam in candelabro exultantem, Mihi autem absit gloriari, nisi in cruce Domini nostri Jesu Christi. Gal. vi. 14.*

Augustine's view of this passage, when we come to his reconciliation of the command here given, "*Let your light shine before men,*" with the warning against doing any of our righteousness "*before men, to be seen of them.*" (vi. 1—18.) For the present it will be sufficient to observe, that he suggests the difficulty, and in this way solves it: the Lord says not here, "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may glorify*" you; but, that they may "*glorify your Father which is in heaven,*"—this his glory, and not your own, is to be the end and aim of your doings;\* and the later prohibition will not be found to be a prohibition of the doing of good deeds before others, but of the doing them with the purpose that those others may exalt and glorify *us*.

Ver. 17, 18.—To the great and important question, namely, in what way Christ was come, "*not to destroy the law, but to fulfil,*" Augustine gives apparently many answers; yet not in fact many, being all at the root but one. First, he says, Christ fulfilled the law by Himself perfectly keeping it. Secondly, he fulfilled it, by shedding abroad that love in the hearts of his people, by which and

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\* *Serm.* 338. c. 3: Non autem Dominus jussit bona opera abscondi, sed in bonis operibus laudem humanam non cogitare. Cf. *Serm.* 149. c. 13: Hoc si quæris, ut glorificetur Deus, noli timere ne videaris ab hominibus. Etiam sic intus est eleemosyna tua in abscondito; ubi solus ille, cujus gloriam quæris, te videt hoc quærere.

by which alone it is truly fulfilled;\* (Rom. xiii. 9, 10;) and where, through the weakness of the flesh, and the remains of old corruptions, they yet came short, Himself fulfilling it in their room, and so having a right to appear as an advocate in their behalf.† Thirdly, He fulfilled it, when in Him whatsoever was shadowed out in the types of the old law found a completion; whatsoever was prophesied and promised, became in him Yea and Amen.‡ (2 Cor. i. 20.) And lastly, He fulfilled it, by unfolding how much it contained, showing how beside the letter which they deemed so easy to satisfy, it had also an inner spirit: that it had a kernel as well as an outer husk; and he oftentimes quotes as a true parallel to this saying, the words of the Baptist: “The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ;” (John i. 17;) § this “grace” that was given by Christ being the power of fulfilling that law, which was before only a threatening and killing letter;|| this “truth” being not opposed to

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\* *Serm.* 125: Quia venit dare caritatem, et caritas perficit legem; merito dixit, Non veni legem solvere, sed implere. *Ep.* 167. c. 6: Lex libertatis, lex caritatis est.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 17: Deinde quia, etiam sub gratiâ positus, in hâc mortali vitâ difficile est omni modo implere quod in lege scriptum est, Non concupisces: ille per carnis suæ sacrificium Sacerdos effectus, impetrat nobis indulgentiam, etiam hinc adimplens legem; ut quod per nostram infirmitatem minus possumus, per illius perfectionem recuperetur, cujus capitis membra effecti sumus. (1 Joh. ii. 1.)

‡ *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 8.

§ *Con. Faust.* l. 17. c. 16.

|| *Serm.* 154. c. 1: Concupiscentiam terruit, non exstinxit; terruit, non oppressit; fecit timorem pœnæ, non amorem justitiæ.



untruth,\* but truth in the sense of reality or body, opposed to shadow or outline; so that those words of St. John's, and these of our Lord's, he would make exactly to answer to that declaration of St. Paul, where speaking of the distinction between clean and unclean meats, and of holidays, new moons, and sabbaths, he says; "which are a *shadow* of things to come, but the *body* is of Christ." (Col. ii. 17; Heb. x. 1.) All these explanations run into one; since in Christ's law-fulfilling walk in the flesh, as the promised Man, and in the consequences of that life of perfect holiness, in his resurrection and ascension, power was first given to humanity to keep the law; even as by that was first revealed to men all that the law of love was, and all the blessed demands which it made upon them; and no less the quarter in which they were to find help for all their shortcomings therein, whereof now they had become more deeply conscious than ever.

By these answers it will at once be seen how little Augustine consents with them, Manichæans of old, Quakers in modern times, who affirm that in the new legislation of Christ there is any abrogation of, or withdrawing, or casting a slight upon, any part of the old. He had on this matter the same great conflict to maintain with the Manichæans, which Irenæus, Tertullian, and others in earlier times, had maintained with the Gnostics:

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\* Not ἀλήθεια, opposed to ψεῦδος, but ἀλήθεια (= εἰκῶν, Heb. x. 1. = σῶμα, Col. ii. 17,) to σκιά, or ὑπόδειγμα, Heb. ix. 23. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. Lxxiii. 1.*



These, as those, eagerly snatched at such passages as Matt. v. 31, 32; 43, 44; they urged them as plain proofs that Christ had come, according to his own declaration, to repeal the Mosaic code; they affirmed that whatever of that code He sanctioned and allowed to stand fast, was not peculiar to Moses, but belonged to the universal morality, while everything distinctive of Moses was by Him disallowed and cast aside. Now Augustine, in reply to these enemies of the Old Testament, does not avail himself of the timid gloss of some modern commentators, and admit that there is such a repealing; but then plead that it is only the Pharisaical additions to, or perversions of, the law which thus are repealed. Rather he denies the repealing altogether; and this verse, he affirms, gives us the key-note of the Sermon on the Mount, at least to the end of its first chapter.\* He declares that in each case the old stands fast, however there may be a new unfolded from it. This verse, as may

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 26: Si Christus ubi quibusdam antiquis sententiis propositis adjunxit, Ego autem dico vobis, neque primorum hominum legem hoc verborum additamento adimplevit, neque illam quæ per Mosem data est quasi contrariorum oppositione destruxit; sed potius omnia ex Hebræorum lege commemorata ita commendavit, ut quidquid ex personâ suâ insuper loqueretur, vel ad expositionem requirendam valeret, si quid illa obscure posuisset, vel ad tutius conservandum quod illa voluisset. Vides quam sit aliter intelligendum, quod ait, Non se venisse legem solvere, sed adimplere; scilicet, ut non quasi semiplena istis verbis integraretur, sed ut quod literâ jubente propter superbiorum præsumptionem non poterat, suadente gratiâ propter humilium confessionem impleretur, opere factorum, non adjectione verborum.

well be supposed, was a hard saying to the adversaries. They had many ways of escape from it, having no good one. Sometimes they denied that the words were Christ's at all, urging that they are only recorded by St. Matthew, who was not called till a later period of our Lord's ministry than that at which he reports these words as spoken, and whose witness they claimed therefore the liberty of putting by.\* Or allowing them to be the Lord's, they replied, that He did not mean the Jewish law, (however He might have been willing that the Jews should understand Him so to speak, and thus lay aside a part of their bitter enmity against Him,) but quite a different thing; that the law that He came to fulfil was the natural law written on men's hearts.† And then, with an attempt to shift the ground of controversy, they would retort on the Catholics, that as little could *they* understand this of that law which was given by Moses. For neither did they themselves act as though Christ had come to fulfil and confirm that, but on the contrary had suffered a great part of its enactments, its feasts and its sacrifices, its circumcision and its sabbaths, its differences of meats, and a thousand other legal observances, to fall out of use; and now would have earnestly resisted their revival. They, too, in their practice plainly implied that Christ had dissolved and abrogated the law which He found in force at his coming.‡

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 17. c. 3.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 1.

‡ *Con. Faust.* l. 18. c. 1, 2. Faustus, the Manichæan, says, Nec tu id credis, de quo me solum incusas.

This charge against the Church, that it too was a dissolver of the law, and could not therefore hold to these words in any sense which would give it a right to accuse others for utterly rejecting them, was, of course, one well worthy of an answer, and Augustine girds himself to the answering it fully. He replies, that in the Church nothing, which there was in the synagogue, is dissolved, but rather everything confirmed,—and this, while in Christ the type has passed into the reality, the flower into the fruit, the prophecy into the fulfilment, and in that is to stand fast for ever. Had those that were Christ's continued after his coming to cling to the type and the prophecy, had they abode among the outlines and the shadows, refusing the substantial realities which now in Him and in his incarnation were made theirs, *then*, indeed, there would have been, on their part, a dissolving of the law and the prophets, inasmuch as it would have seemed that nothing of all which these had foretold or prefigured had come to pass; that all was promise, and nothing fulfilment. But now, whatever they let go in the letter, they did, in the very letting go, declare to be for them spiritually fulfilled.\* They did not practise, now the circumcision of the flesh, but only because Christ had given them the true circumcision of the Spirit, and so caused the shadow to give place to the substance. They kept not the feast of unleavened bread, for in Christ, whatever that feast had foreshadowed was accomplished;

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 18. c. 4. And again : Ideo ablata, quia impleta.

He had purged out the old leaven from men's life, causing them to be unleavened in Him;\* nor the passover, now that the true Lamb of God, indeed without blemish, was slain. They observed not the sabbath, which, indeed, was only such in a figure; for now the true sabbaths, those to which the others pointed, were come; seeing that He was come, in whom there is the true rest and sabbath-keeping for men's spirits, He, who could say, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."† In this way Christ fulfilled, and did not dissolve, the ceremonial part of Moses' law,—even as the moral precepts, by the new light which He cast upon them, by the added grace that He gave, enabling men to observe them.‡ But to this subject there will be frequent necessity of returning.

Ver. 19, 20.—What is this being "*least in the kingdom of heaven*," which is here threatened? Augustine starts with taking certainly for granted that the doer and teacher

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 10: Cum quæris, Cur azyma sicut Judæi non observet Christianus, si Christus non venit legem solvere sed implere? Respondeo, immo propterea magis hoc non observat Christianus, quia quod illâ figurâ prophetabatur, expurgato veteris vitæ fermento, novam vitam demonstrans, Christus implevit.

+ *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 19. Cf. *Con. Adimant.* c. 16.

‡ *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 18: Hæc præcepta sunt morum; illa sacramenta sunt promissorum: hæc implentur per adjuvantem gratiam, illa per redditam veritatem; utraque per Christum, et illum semper gratiam donantem, nunc etiam revelantem, et hanc veritatem tunc promittentem, nunc exhibentem.

of transgression,\* of whom Christ is now speaking, even though it be only in regard of "*one of these least commandments*," cannot be one who will ultimately have any part with Him. There are two explanations, then, of the difficulty of finding a place at all assigned to him in Christ's kingdom: for on the face of the words, he that is "*least in the kingdom*" has a place in that kingdom, albeit that place is the lowest:—either, that is, to take "*the kingdom of heaven*" as the Church militant, the kingdom in the present earlier state of its development, in which false teachers and evil workers are mingled with the doers and teachers of the truth, and to say, that in this he shall have a place, though, in God's estimate, the lowest place, and one from which, as an unworthy occupant, he shall hereafter be cast out altogether. In this way Augustine oftentimes explains the passage, referring in proof of such use of the term, "*kingdom of heaven*," to such passages as Matt. xiii. 47.† Sometimes, however, he has

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\* He, however, does not understand the words exactly thus—but of one who does ill, while he teaches well, making this a parallel phrase to Matt. xxiii. 3, "They say and do not." (Beza, in modern times, has the same construction, making *καὶ διδάσκει* = *κἂν διδάσκει*, and referring *οὕτω* to the *ποιεῖν*, and not to the *λύειν*.) Thus, *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 122. c. 9: Denique ut ostenderet istos minimos reprobos esse, qui docent bona loquendo, quæ solvunt male vivendo, nec quasi minimos in vitâ æternâ futuros, sed omnino ibi non futuros . . . continuo subjeit, Dico enim vobis, nisi &c. Cf. *Serm.* 252. c. 3.

+ Thus *Serm.* 252. c. 3: Minimus vocabitur in regno cœlorum. Sed in quo regno cœlorum? In ecclesiâ quæ modo est . . . Ibi erit, sed minimus. Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 20. c. 9.

another solution ; he takes "*the kingdom of heaven*" as the perfected kingdom of glory, that into which nothing unholy shall enter ; and then he understands the announcement that he shall be "*least*" there, as one of those mitigated forms of expression, in which oftentimes threatening is more awfully concentrated than in many a loudest menace ;\* to say that he "*shall be least*" there, being but another way of saying that he shall not be found there at all. The net now has fish of all kinds and all sizes, but then it shall only contain "*great fishes*"† (John xxi. 11) in it, and such as are "*least*" shall not be found in it at all. It will at once be seen that these two explanations do not contradict one another ; he shall be least in the kingdom now, and excluded from it altogether hereafter.

I confess, however, it seems to me hardly likely that the "*least in the kingdom of heaven*" can mean one excluded from it altogether, especially as our Lord has used elsewhere the selfsame phrase in so very different a sense. (Matt. xi. 11.) We may more naturally understand Him to be speaking here of some, who out of a false freedom taught, and themselves practised, an exemption from certain special Christian precepts, dealing with them as though they were annulled and abrogated ; and who yet,

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\* Ἐλάχιστος = novissimus *et nullus*.

† In *Ev. Joh. Tract.* 122. For the full understanding his allusion here, it would be needful to enter into the allegorical signification, which he finds in the miraculous draught of fishes after the Resurrection.



despite of this, did in the inmost centre of their life belong to Christ. Such should be "*least in the kingdom of God*"—in it, being saved by their faith; but "*least*" in it, as having taken so false and one-sided a view of its enactments—"least" now in the judgment of God, and in the work which from that false standing point they should be able to accomplish—"least" hereafter in the place that should be assigned them. And Augustine's argument, drawn from ver. 20,—which he makes only to be the stronger and yet more emphatic repetition of ver. 19,—and so "*least in the kingdom*," in the former verse, to be identical with the having no entrance into that kingdom in the latter,—appears to me an erroneous one, drawn from a wrong view of the relation in which the verses stand to one another. The second does not say over again what the first had said, but rather there is progress and a climax in the verses. Such a relaxing for yourselves and for others of the commandments will *set you low* in the true kingdom of obedience and holiness; (ver. 19;) but this of having a righteousness so utterly false and hollow as that of the Scribes and Pharisees, will not merely set you low, but will exclude you from that kingdom altogether; (ver. 20;) for while that marks an *impaired* spiritual vision, this marks a vision utterly darkened and destroyed.

Ver. 21, 22.—On the words "*Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause*," Augustine observes, that in the Greek MSS. the last words find no place, and it is



simply and with no qualification; “*Whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.*” This, however, is not the fact with the greater number of existing MSS., in which, as in Fathers of the second century, and also in most of the early versions, “*without a cause*” is to be found. He must himself naturally have desired it there; for he sides in this matter, and rightly, with the Peripatetic rather than the Stoic, everywhere recognizing the possibility of an holy anger; and he ingeniously shows, that even should it be right to omit these words here, the prohibition of anger is still not absolute, nor without its qualifications; since it is with thy brother, not with thy brother’s sin, that thou art forbidden to be angry.\* Anger itself may be an holy passion; it is attributed to Christ, (Mark iii. 5,) and to God; the possibility of its being sinless in man is expressly recognized in those words of the apostle, “Be ye angry, and sin not.” (Ephes. iv. 26.) For it is not, he says, itself hatred, though when it is cherished long it is evermore in danger of degenerating into hatred; as wine too long kept, of turning into vinegar: and therefore is it to be gotten rid of, to be emptied out from the vessel of the heart, without delay: “Let not the sun go down upon your wrath.”†

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\* *Retract.* l. 1. c. 19: Non fratri irascitur, qui peccato fratris irascitur. It is here that he notes sine causâ to be wanting in the Greek MSS.; in his Exposition of the discourse itself he reads it. Among the leading MSS. B (the Cod. Vat.) is the only one that now has it not. A and C have unfortunately *lacunæ* exactly here.

† *Ep.* 38: Nulli irascenti ira sua videtur injusta [ἐικη]. Ita

With regard to the word "*Racha*," Augustine tells us, that he had learned from a Jew whom he had questioned on the subject, that it is not a word having any distinct significance, but rather an interjection, the vague exclamation of an indignant mind.\* And accepting this account of the word, he finds a natural and easy climax here. The first grade of the sin is, when a man feels the emotion of a causeless anger in his heart, which yet he so represses, that it does not find any utterance without. In the second it breaks forth into utterances of passion, such as this "*Racha*," which however as yet, having no fixed meaning attached to them, are not words of settled scorn and contempt. This is the third degree of the sin, when it is indeed no longer merely anger, for it has ripened into hate. He is no doubt perfectly right in affirming that degrees of guilt are intended to be signified here; although those who in modern times have gone the deepest into the matter do not acquiesce in the interpretation of his Jew; but explain "*Racha*" as a term of reproach, not indeed

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enim inveterascens ira fit odium, dum quasi justī doloris admixta dulcedo, diutius eam in vase detinet, donec totum acescat, vasque corrumpat. Quapropter multo melius nec juste cuiquam irascimur, quam velut juste irascendo in alicujus odium iræ occultâ facilitate delabimur. In recipiendis enim hospitibus ignotis, solemus dicere, multo esse melius malum hominem perpeti, quam forsitan per ignorantiam excludi bonum, dum cavemus ne recipiatur malus. Sed in affectibus animi contra est. Nam incomparabiliter salubrius est etiam iræ juste pulsanti non aperire penetrabile cordis, quam admittere non facile recessuram, et perventuram de surculo ad trabem.

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 9: Dixit enim esse vocem non significantem aliquid, sed indignantis animi motum exprimentem.

very severe, but having a fixed meaning, and that pretty nearly equivalent to our English, Oh vain man !\*

And as ascending degrees of guilt are involved in those different outcomings of anger, so also degrees of penalty are expressed by the "*judgment*," the "*council*," and the "*hell-fire*" or Gehenna; but all of them penalties divine, not human: with the deeper guilt there goes along the deeper damnation. For it is a strange marring and misunderstanding of our Lord's words on the part of some,—one from which Augustine, as will be seen by the next quotation, is altogether free,—to make the two first, the "*judgment*" and the "*council*," expressions of penalties inflicted by earthly tribunals; and only the third, the "*Gehenna*," that which comes directly from the sentence of God. On the contrary, they are all earthly forms under which the different degrees of loss and injury for the spirit of man, reaching at last to its total loss and

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\* *Racha*=ὦ ἄνθρωπε κενέ, Jam. ii. 20. The use by St. James of this very term, and of the forbidden *μωρός* by our Lord himself, (Matt. xxiii. 17,) are alone proofs, if any were needed, that these terms are instanced but as signs of inward states of enmity and scorn: else might a new Pharisaism develop itself out of this very teaching of Christ's; such as, avoiding certain expressly forbidden utterances of outrage and ill will, should count itself free to use any other. But even as these, where love is, may be righteously and holily used, and Christ and his servants spake the keenest things in love, (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 21. c. 27: Non dicit fratri suo, Fatue, qui cum hoc dicit, non ipsi fraternitati, sed peccato ejus infensus est,) so where love is not, the guilt of "*Racha*," and "*Thou fool*," will be incurred not merely where these words are exchanged for others, but where no word at all finds utterance from the lips.

perdition,—set forth by the casting out into the place appointed for the burning of the offal of Jerusalem,—are described. It is scarcely possible to imagine a greater missing of the meaning, a more complete perplexing of the whole passage, than is theirs, who find here any allusion to earthly judgment-seats or human councils, save as the shadows under which the things heavenly, in themselves unutterable, are portrayed.\* Therefore our translation “*hell-fire*” is not happy, as somewhat countenancing the confusion; not that the eternal loss is not by our Lord indicated, but since that has twice before been mentioned under forms of things earthly, so should it still have been here. The valley of Hinnom, profaned by the idolatrous worship of Moloch, (2 Kin. xxiii. 10; Jer. vii. 31,) and thereafter the place where every abomination was flung forth, the offal and the carcases, to be gnawed by the worm, and from time to time to be consumed by the fire, is the “*Gehenna*” here. And our Lord is saying exactly the contrary to that which they who so interpret will then be making Him to say: He is saying; Moses gave you a law for the outer man; he told you that if you killed, you should die. That is well; but there is another region which that precept could not reach, which nothing that Moses had to impart could reach, a region with which earthly tribunals do not meddle, but over which I am

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 9: Videntur ergo aliqui gradus in peccatis et in reatu, sed quibus modis invisibiliter exhibeantur meritis animarum, quis potest dicere?

Lord; and I tell you that you must learn to look at the least germs of evil will to your brother, the faintest rudiments of hate, as having in them the nature of deadliest sin, as implicit murder,\* to be checked in the very outset; since each growth of this indulged evil will bring you under greater and greater condemnation, till at last it will bring on a total and final separation of your souls from the fountain of grace and love; so that, being entirely reprobate, ye shall be cast out to that fearful place, of which the valley of Hinnom, with its worm and its fire, is the nearest, though indeed only the faint, earthly representation.

Ver. 23, 24.—In this way Augustine traces the connexion with what precedes: If thou mayest not be angry with thy brother, much less mayest thou retain in thine heart a deep-seated and lasting alienation from him: or elsewhere, with a slight difference: Thou hast heard the awful consequences of a sin against thy brother, how it separates thee not merely from him, but from God: hear

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\* Augustine quotes, exactly to the point, 1 John iii. 15. And *Serm.* 58. c. 7: *Gladium non eduxisti, non vulnus in carne fecisti, non corpus plagâ aliquâ trucidâsti. Cogitatio sola odii in corde tuo est, et teneris homicida. . . . Quantum ad te pertinet, occidisti quem odisti. Emenda te, corrige te. Si in domibus vestris scorpiones essent aut aspides, quantum laboraretis, ut domus vestras purgaretis, et securi habitare possetis? Irascimini, et inveterantur iræ in cordibus vestris, fiunt tot odia, tot trabes, tot scorpii, tot serpentes; et domum Dei, cor vestrum, purgare non vultis?*

now also the remedy,\* how thou mayest restore thy disturbed relations with thy God ; for thy present condition unfits thee for communion with Him, deprives thee of the privilege of offering to Him any gift, since thou must *thyself* be an offering, before any meaner thing which thou bringest can be welcome as such.†

But how obey the command to “*go*,” to our brother ? The half completed sacrifice will hardly endure so great a delay. It may be that we are ignorant where now to seek him, or, if we know, that lands and seas lie between him and us. This going then must be most often a going in heart, an hastening with the swift affection of love, not with the tardy motion of the feet.‡ And the altar and the offering, in like manner, must be spiritually understood. We offer our gift, when we bring any sacrifice of praise or prayer ; we offer it on God’s altar when we bring it aright : heretics, as Augustine observes, offer not *on the altar*, they rather cast their unaccepted gifts on the ground. From all this it is plain that he does not see any imme-

\* *Serm.* 82. c. 3 : Ecce ille reatus gehennæ quam cito solutus est. Nondum reconciliatus, eras gehennæ reus : reconciliatus, securus offers munus tuum ad altare.

† *Serm.* 82. c. 3 : Offers munus tuum, et tu non es munus Dei.

‡ *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 10 : Pergendum est ergo . . . non pedibus corporis, sed motibus animi, ut te humili affectu prosternas fratri ad quem carâ cogitatione cucurreris, in conspectu ejus, cui munus oblaturus es. Ita enim etiamsi præsens sit, poteris eum non simulato animo lenire, atque in gratiam revocare, veniam postulando ; si hoc prius coram Deo feceris, pergens ad eum non pigro motu corporis, sed celerrimo dilectionis affectu.



diate nor any direct reference here to the Holy Eucharist ; though, indeed, in that, as being the culminating act of self-oblation unto God, there must be on the part of the offerer a perfect charity, if his highest gift, to wit, that of himself, is to be graciously received. Speaking while the Jewish temple service was yet in existence, our Lord clothes an eternal truth in language borrowed from that temporary institution ; and to find direct allusion to anything else in these terms “*altar*” and “*gift*” is highly unnatural ;\* and certainly, as far as any passage I am myself acquainted with, Augustine does not do so.†

But there still remains to consider what these words, “*have ought against thee*” may mean. Is the offerer of the gift to be considered as the injured or injurious person ? is he to hasten and *bestow* forgiveness for a wrong that has

\* The most important passage in Augustine on the spiritual sacrifices which the faithful are evermore to offer unto God, and the relation in which they stand to the abrogated sacrifices of the law, is to be found *De Civ. Dei*, l. 10. c. 3—6. Thus, c. 3 : Cum ad illum sursum est, ejus est altare cor nostrum : ejus Unigenito cum sacerdote placamus : ei cruentas victimas cædimus, quando usque ad sanguinem pro ejus veritate certamus : ei suavissimum adolemus incensum, cum in ejus conspectu pio sanctoque amore flagramus : ei dona ejus in nobis, nosque ipsos vovemus, et reddimus ei beneficiorum ejus solemnitatibus festis et diebus statutis dicamus sacramusque memoriam, ne volumine temporum ingrata subrepat oblivio : ei sacrificamus hostiam humilitatis et laudis in arâ cordis igne fervidæ caritatis.

† No doubt there is some passage of the kind, as Johnson, in his *Unbloody Sacrifice*, numbers St. Augustine among those who have so interpreted the “*altar*” here, but he does not give any especial reference.



been done him, or to sue forgiveness for a wrong that he has done? The words, as Augustine observes,\* clearly point out the last to be the meaning. If our brother had wronged us, *we* should have something against *him*, not he against us. It would be no duty then to seek him, or to ask pardon; but only to be willing to be sought by him, and to bestow pardon on him: where we have been the wronger, there we are to *seek* it. This done, “*then come and offer thy gift,*” that is, this being accomplished in spirit, go forward in the sacrifice of worship, or praise, supplication, or whatsoever else it was, of which thou hadst commenced the offering to thy God.†

Ver. 25, 26.—Augustine’s interpretation of the precept, “*Agree with thine adversary quickly,*” is remarkable, though it requires some modification before it can claim entire assent. That other explanation seems weak and trivial, though supported by considerable authorities, which would make this merely a counsel of worldly prudence, and to

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. i. c. 10: Si in mentem venerit quod aliquid habeat adversum nos frater: id est, si nos eum in aliquo læsimus, tunc enim ipse habet adversum nos: nam nos adversus illum habemus, si ille nos læsit: ubi non opus est pergere ad reconciliationem: non enim veniam postulabis ab eo qui tibi fecit injuriam, sed tantum dimittes. A comparison with Mark xi. 25; Rev. ii. 4, 14, 20, confirms this as the true meaning of ἔχειν τι κατά τινα.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. l. c. 10: Atque inde veniens, id est, intentionem revocans ad id quod agere cœperas, offers munus tuum.

say no more than this, Seeing that the issue of every pleading before a judge is uncertain, be not stiff and stern in refusing terms of peace and reconciliation, lest unexpectedly judgment be given against thee, and afterwards thou rue bitterly thine obstinacy and thine implacable mind. But since counsels of a merely worldly prudence do not and cannot find place in our Lord's teaching, it is nothing strange that Augustine does not even consider this literal explanation, but at once looks for a spiritual, and inquires, who is the "*adversary*" with whom we are bidden to "*agree*." It cannot, he observes, be the devil, for however the term "*adversary*" (ὁ ἀντίδικος, cf. 1 Pet. v. 8) would suit him, yet our part is not to consent, but to proclaim and maintain eternal warfare, with him.\* Nor can it be the flesh, though that too is an adversary warring against the soul; for men are only too willing to consent with it, and the true course is not so to do, but rather to make it consent with us.† Nor can it, he affirms, be any fellow man whatever; for what power would such an one have to deliver us over to an eternal doom?‡ Nor yet can the "*adversary*" be exactly God, though He too might well be termed the adversary of the

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 11: Neque concordare cum illo expedit, cui semel renunciando, bellum indiximus, et quo victo coronabimur: neque consentire illi jam oportet, cui si nunquam consensissemus, nunquam in istas incidissemus miserias.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 11: Qui eam servituti subjiciunt, non ipsi ei consentiunt, sed eam sibi consentire cogunt.

‡ *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 11: Quomodo judicii traditurus est, qui ante judicem pariter exhibebitur?

sinner, since then the image would be disturbed, and God would be at the same time the accusing party, and the judge before whom the two parties are going. Therefore, Augustine concludes, though this is not far from the truth, yet it will be better still to say that the adversary is the Law—an adversary so long as for the past it condemns us, and for the present commands us one thing and we do and love another: and every step of our lives which we take with this adversary unreconciled, is a drawing nearer to the judgment and to a certain condemnation.\* But when we love the thing which it commands, which in Christ we are enabled to do, and the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, then we are reconciled unto it. It is a law, indeed, still, but a law of liberty.† For the past also we are reconciled unto it,

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\* *Serm.* 251. c. 8: Quis est adversarius tuus? Sermo legis. Quæ est via? vita ista. Quomodo est ille adversarius? Dicit, Non mœchaberis, et tu vis mœchari. Dicit, Non concupiscas rem proximi tui; et tu vis rapere res alienas. . . . Quando vides quia ille sermo aliud jubet, et tu aliud facis, est adversarius tuus. . . . Compone, dum es cum illo in viâ. Adest Deus qui vos concordet. Quomodo vos concordat Deus? Donando peccata et inspirando justitiam ut fiant opera bona. Cf. *Serm.* 109. c. 3, 4: Adversarius est voluntatis tuæ, donec fiat auctor salutis tuæ. . . . Adversarius est nobis, quamdiu sumus et ipsi nobis. . . . Si cum eo consenseris, pro judice invenies patrem, pro ministro sævo angelum tollentem in sinum Abrahæ, pro carcere paradisum. Cf. *Serm.* 9. c. 3, and *Serm.* 387.

† The redeemed man is not any more, according to Augustine's profound distinction, (*In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 3,) *sub lege*, but *cum lege* and *in lege*—not *under* the law, (Qui enim *sub* lege est, non implet legem, sed *premitur* a lege: *Enarr. in Ps.* cxliii. 1,) but yet neither

inasmuch as through Christ Jesus and faith in his blood it has lost its accusing power. We have learned to accuse ourselves, and have thus taken from the law its desire of accusing us any more. And this is to be done “*quickly*,” because we know not how soon for us “*the way*” may be ended, and we may find ourselves suddenly in the presence of the Judge.\*

Now it is most true, as he affirms, that the outraged law of God is the real “*adversary*,” but yet that law is here contemplated, according to the whole connexion of the passage, as embodied and finding its representative in the brother who has something against us. And his objection to understanding by the adversary a fellow man at all—for how, he asks, could such have power to deliver us to the heavenly judgment?—is capable of an easy dilution. His appeals to the All-seeing and All-searching against our continued enmity, our determined refusals to walk in love, will be, whether he desire them to be so or not, a delivering us to the judge, as further he will deliver us, by being compelled to appear against us and be our accuser at that day.†

As regards the minor details of this parabolic saying, by

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ἀνομος, because ἐννομος Χριστῷ, (1 Cor. ix. 21,) because every loosing from the old is in its very nature an attaching to the new. (Rom. vii. 1—4.)

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. l. c. 11.

† It is remarkable that Hilary had already anticipated this objection and difficulty, and answered it: *Adversario tradente nos judici, quia manens in eum similitatis nostræ ira nos arguit.*

“*the Judge*” he understands not the Father, but Christ, since “the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son;”—by “*the officer*,” an angel, since He will come with all his holy angels to judge both the quick and dead;—by the “*prison*,” the outer darkness, the place of lost spirits; not purgatory, as the modern Romanists, who see in the words “*till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing*,” a limit defined, after which there would be deliverance from this prison. That such an interpretation was stirring in his time we learn from his own words. It was one that he would willingly have himself consented to, but that he found the Scriptures on the other side too clear and too strong. He asks with truth, How can any paying of this debt come to pass in that world where there is no place for amendment or repentance? \* and is compelled to find in these words the expression of an everlasting doom. †

Ver. 27, 28.—Here Augustine makes an accurate and important distinction; that it is not, namely, the looking,

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. i. c. 11: Unde enim solvitur illud debitum, ubi jam non datur pœnitendi et correctius vivendi locus? And again: Semper solvit novissimum quadrantem, dum sempiternas pœnas terrenorum peccatorum luit.

† *De Octo Dulc. Quæst.* qu. 1: Illud enim quod dicitur, quandoque, etsi post plurimum temporis, eos qui in catholicâ communionem moriuntur, quamvis usque in finem vitæ hujus flagitiosissime et sceleratissime vixerint, de pœnis ultatricibus exituros familiarius meum tangit affectum. But he goes on to say, such passages as 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Ephes. v. 5, 6, are too strong on the other side.

out of which, unawares to the beholder, there arises up in his heart the suggestion of an unholy desire, which makes a man guilty of that sin which the Lord is characterizing here; but the looking *with the intention and purpose* of thereby feeding desire;\* though indeed it is nothing but a practical Pelagianism, which would deny the concupiscence itself, whether willingly or unwillingly stirred, to be of the nature of sin. But it is not this of which Christ is here speaking, but rather of the deliberate fomenting and feeding of desire through the fuel of impure looks: he that so doth, "*hath committed adultery already in his heart*," and not he merely in whom sin is "finished" in act, as well as in desire.

Ver. 29, 30.—He questions whether this "*right eye*" which must be plucked out, and "*right hand*" which must be cut off, shall be understood generally of anything that is eminently dear to us,† or whether we shall give them a more special signification. He determines for the

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. l. 1. c. 12*: Non dixit, Omnis qui concupiverit mulierem, sed qui viderit mulierem ad concupiscendum eam: id est, hoc fine et hoc animo attenderit, ut eam concupiscat. This distinction has been often overlooked; yet it is required by the words themselves. *Πρὸς τὸ* (eo ut) is not = *εἰς τὸ* (ita ut). In the first, which stands here, is involved not merely the event, but also the intention.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. l. 1. c. 13*: Quidquid namque est quod significat oculus, sine dubio tale est quod vehementer diligitur. Solet enim et ab iis qui vehementer volunt exprimere dilectionem suam, ita dici, Diligo eum ut oculos meos, aut etiam plus quam oculos meos.



latter, and will have the "*right eye*" to mean some beloved friend, our counsellor and guide in divine things, whom yet we must cast off if he would lead us into heresies and errors,\* even as by the "*right hand*" is meant our active helper and minister in the same, whom in like manner, under the like circumstances, at every cost and pain to ourselves, we must reject and cut off. They are therefore called the "*right eye*" and the "*right hand*," that is, those of most price and esteem, because they are guides and helpers in things of greatest moment, to wit, in things spiritual. And in this he notes that another consequence is included: for if even such as these must be cast off, how much more the *left eye* and the *left hand*, the helpers not in spiritual but in worldly things, if they would put a stumbling block in our way.

The only objection to this interpretation is its narrowness; that it does not and cannot exhaust the meaning of the words: though it is important to hold fast what in it is involved, namely, that these are not sins, but *occasions of sin*, which are to be cut off without pity. Christ is not here telling us that our sinful lusts are to be renounced, for that were of course; but that what is harmless in itself, yea, in its subordinate position useful and comely, and

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\* *Serm.* 81. He instances, as an example of what he means, our Lord's conduct with Peter, and his words to him, "Get thee behind me, Satan," (Matt. xvi. 23,) when he would have placed a stumbling block in his way, though of course it did not then come to the actual casting off, the rebuke being effectual to bring back Peter to his true position.



thus likened to the hand and the eye, even this, if through any peculiarity of our temperament or condition, through any temptation in which it entangles us, it hinders the main work of our salvation, is to be offered up to that, as the less to the greater, as the part to the whole.

Ver. 31.—Here, too, the Manichæans found a contradiction between the teaching of Moses and of Christ; Moses giving facilities for divorce; “Whosoever will put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement;” but Christ throwing every hindrance in the way of it, declaring that marriage, “*saving for the cause of fornication,*” was indissoluble. It is true that in this they involved themselves in a contradiction which did not escape the keenness of the adversary with whom they had to do; since Moses, whom they spake against, was yet here, according to their own principles, worthiest of praise, in helping to dissolve the bands of an institution, which they traced up to the devil,\* and which, as they affirmed, contributed to the detaining of the divine principle in a material prison. But soon leaving this, which was only by the way, Augustine answered triumphantly, that the legislation of Moses and of Christ, so far from being opposed to one another, were in fact both in the same line. When Moses said, “*Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him*

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 26: Verumtamen . . . quæro cur displiceat dimittere uxorem, quam non ad matrimonii fidem, sed ad concupiscentiæ crimen, habendum esse censetis? . . . Eo modo enim putatis partem Dei vestri . . . etiam carnis compedibus colligari.

*give her a writing of divorcement,*"\* this was not spoken to encourage divorces, but, on the contrary, to throw impediments in their way. A man could not at every light motion of caprice or anger dismiss his wife, but was thus compelled to have resort to a legal process, and to the Scribe, who alone could draw out the necessary instrument, and who might be assumed, from his position and education, to be a wise and a prudent man; able, therefore, and willing, if that were possible, to remove misunderstandings and offences, to knit again the bands of a broken love between the two parties; and who, only when every such attempt had failed, would give the bill of divorce which the husband required.† This much the law did; why it did not more the Lord himself tells us elsewhere; "Moses, because of the hardness of your hearts, *suffered* you to put away your wives;"‡ but the legislation of Moses is in the same direction with that of Christ,

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 14: Qui dimiserit, det illi libellum repudii: ut iracundiam temerariam projicientis uxorem libelli cogitatio temperaret. Qui ergo dimittendi moram quæsivit, significavit quantum potuit duris hominibus se nolle disscidium.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 26: Præsertim quia, ut perhibent apud Hebræos scribere literas Hebræas nulli fas erat nisi scribis solis. . . . Ad hos igitur quos oporteret esse prudentes legis interpretes et justos disscidii dissuasores, lex mittere voluit eum, quem jussit libellum repudii dare, si dimisisset uxorem. Non enim ei poterat scribi libellus, nisi ab ipsis qui per hanc occasionem ex necessitate venientem quodammodo in manus suas bono consilio regerent, atque inter ipsum et uxorem pacifice agendo dilectionem concordiamque suaderent.

‡ *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 29.

the one a lower, the other a higher, witness for the sanctity of marriage; in each there was alike a declaration that the Lord "hateth putting away," though he did not impose upon them who were yet living in the oldness of the letter, the higher precept, or introduce them into the fuller blessings which they only were capable of receiving who were walking in the newness of the Spirit.

Ver. 32.—Is the sin, Augustine stops here to inquire, which the Lord recognizes as a justifying cause of divorce, to be taken in its literal sense, and to be confined to that only? or shall we rather receive it according to its wider spiritual significance, and by this "*fornication*" understand every graver sin which corrupts and defiles the soul, according to that profound symbolism of Scripture, which evermore speaks of all grievous departures of all kinds from God under this image of a wife breaking faith with her husband? His determination, in which however he disagrees with most of the Fathers of the Church, is in favour of the latter view.\* Yet one cannot doubt that the literal is the true sense of the passage. For there is evidently no cogency in his argument, that there are other sins of a deeper dye than this; and, therefore, if this jus-

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 16: Ex quo intelligitur quod propter illicitas concupiscentias, non tantum quæ in stupris . . . committantur, sed omnino quaslibet, quæ animam corpore male utentem a lege Dei aberrare faciunt, et perniciose turpiterque corrumpi, possit sine crimine et vir uxorem dimittere et uxor virum. Cf. c. 12, and *Quæst.* 88. qu. 83.

tifies a separation, by so much the more will those. It is enough to reply that those other sins, if indeed they be graver, yet do not contradict the very idea of marriage, do not assail it at its very heart and centre; so little do they do so, that if only this faith be kept, marriage may exist as truly between the unregenerate as the faithful, the wicked as the godly, though of course it will not be to them the shadow of so great a mystery. Nor is it to be thought of that our Lord, uttering here, as He knew He was, a word which should be in all ages as a sharp sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of relations the closest, would yet have left it in such vagueness and uncertainty, exposed to such cruel abuses, as it must needs be, if the literal meaning of the words be once abandoned, and that which is thus proposed accepted in its stead.\*

But there is another question, in the matter of which the judgment of Augustine has certainly had a most powerful influence, first, on the interpretation of the words of Scripture, and through this on the determinations of the Church;—I mean the lawfulness of the marriage of the innocent and injured party, after separation on account of

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\* Augustine himself, in his *Retractations*, l. 1. c. 19, acknowledges that the whole matter—*latebrosissima quæstio*, as he terms it—deserves to be considered anew, and though he does not withdraw, yet speaks with no confidence of, the decision to which he has arrived. *Sed quam velit Dominus intelligi fornicationem, propter quam liceat dimittere uxorem, utrum eam quæ damnatur in stupris, an illam de quâ dicitur, Perdidisti omnem qui fornicatur abs te (Ps. LXXII. 27), in quâ utique et ista est, . . . etiam atque etiam cogitandum est atque requirendum.*

a breach of the marriage vow in the other party. The Church of Rome, which, as is well known, denies altogether this permission, has always very much appealed to his authority. And his weight is no doubt thrown very decidedly into this scale :\* he does not, however, profess to see his way in the matter with perfect clearness, and acknowledges at the last† how little satisfied he is with what he has done, confessing the great difficulty and obscurity which hangs over the whole question ; an obscurity so great, that in another work, written late in his life, he affirms that he who shall here take up and act on the erroneous interpretation cannot be said more than venially to err.‡

His arguments that there can be no permission here of marriage in any case after divorce, (the divorced party still living,) are chiefly these. Such an interpretation of this passage cannot be the right one, for so it will be brought into contradiction with 1 Cor. vii. 10, 11, "Let not the wife depart from her husband. But and if she depart, let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband."

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\* Thus *Serm.* 392. c. 2: Solius fornicationis causâ licet uxorem adulteram dimittere, sed illâ vivente non licet alteram ducere. . . . Adulteria sunt, non conjugia.

† *Retract.* l. 2. c. 57: Scripsi duos libros . . . cupiens solvere difficillimam quæstionem. Quod utrum enodatissime fecerim, nescio: immo vero non me pervenisse ad hujus rei perfectionem sentio.

‡ *De Fide et Oper.* c. 19: In ipsis divinis sententiis ita obscurum est utrum et iste, cui quidem sine dubio adulteram licet dimittere, adulter tamen habeatur si alteram duxerit, ut quantum existimo venialiter ibi quisque fallatur.

The steps of his argument are the following: Our Lord declares one only cause which will justify a wife departing from her husband, that is, his adultery. St. Paul therefore here could not have contemplated any other cause. Contemplating, then, as he must have done, this, he did yet give the precept, "Let her remain unmarried," unless she be reconciled to him.\*

Those who maintain the opposite view have questioned whether St. Paul did not contemplate other grounds of separation, not indeed as belonging to the highest Christian state, in which it is clear they could not occur, but yet as not entirely inconsistent with a true Christian profession; and this provisional bearing with a more imperfect state of things, and this moderation in dealing with the perplexities which must have arisen from the first growing up of a Christian Church out of an heathen world, is part, they say, of the wonderful wisdom of the great Gentile apostle. But while he bears with such things, he yet declares at the same time the higher law; and with this toleration of *separations*, will yet in no case allow an infringement of the Lord's precept, which forbids *divorces* on all lower grounds, and so forbids a new marriage upon either side, saving where the adultery of the other party has, *de facto*, dissolved the union, having annulled its essential condition; "*They two* shall be one flesh." But this view is altogether strange to Augustine. When he is pressed, as he is by Pollentius, whom he answers at length,

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\* *De Conjug. Adulter.* l. 1. c. 1—7.



with the Lord's own words here, and at Matt. xix. 9, he forsakes the canon\* which he has himself elsewhere laid down, namely, that the shorter and more incomplete passage is to receive the law of its interpretation from the longer and fuller; and proceeding exactly on the opposite principle, he finds the limitation of these passages in St. Matthew in the parallel ones of St. Mark, (x. 11,) and St. Luke, (xvi. 18.)† And then, to bring these sayings into agreement with those, he has recourse to this scheme, certainly an artificial one, namely, that by the exception, "*saving for the cause of fornication,*" the Lord intended, that it would be a *greater* sin to dismiss her without this provocation, not that it would be *no* sin with this provocation to do it, and to marry another; for, he says, the Lord pronounced it adultery in either case, only in one of a worse kind than in the other.‡

Another argument which Augustine finds against under-

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\* Pauciora exponi debent secundum plura, et regula generalis per exceptionem alibi traditam est limitanda.

† *De Conjug. Adult.* l. 1. c. 11, 22: Quod subobscure apud Matthæum positum est, quoniam totum a parte significatum est, expositum est apud alios, qui totum generaliter expresserunt, sicut legitur apud Marcum (x. 11); et apud Lucam (xvi. 18).

‡ *De Conjug. Adult.* l. 1. c. 9: Cur ergo, inquis, interposuit Dominus causam fornicationis, et non potius generaliter ait, Quicumque dimiserit uxorem suam et aliam duxerit, mœchatur? . . . . Credo, quia illud quod majus est, hoc Dominus commemorare voluit. Majus enim adulterium esse quis negat, uxore non fornicante dimissâ alteram ducere, quam si fornicantem quisque dimiserit, et tunc alteram duxerit? Non quia et hoc adulterium non est, sed quia minus est.



standing the words as involving such a permission, is that so a reconciliation with the guilty party becomes impossible, while yet he believes that under the new covenant of grace such, where there is repentance, ought to find place ; for he argues that as God receives back the souls that have departed from Him, and defiled themselves, if only penitent and believing, into his favour and grace, reunites them to Himself, this should be the pattern and example for his people ; there should not be a greater severity and remembrance of sin on man's part ; there should not be in any case a casting off for ever.\* But the analogy does not hold good ; he should have taken the sins not merely which are inconsistent with, but that *which directly contradicts*, the idea of the relations between God and man, and shown that there is forgiveness for that. Now there is only one such sin, and that we know is irremissible, the sin against the Holy Ghost. If there is to be an argument from this analogy, here and here only would it be fairly drawn. Other blemishes in the conduct of the married one to another, as harshness or unkindness, disturb the relation, but do not, as does this sin, contradict and deny its fundamental idea. Moreover, one cannot

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\* *De Conjug. Adult.* l. ii. c. 6 : Hæc crimina in Vetere Dei Lege nullis sacrificiis mundabantur, quæ Novi Testamenti sanguine sine dubitatione mundantur ; et ideo tunc omnimodo prohibitum est ab alio contaminatam viro recipere uxorem . . . Nunc autem postea quam Christus ait adulteræ, Nec ego te damnabo, vade, deinceps noli peccare ; quis non intelligat debere ignoscere maritum, quod videt ignovisse Dominum amborum.

help feeling, that while this recommendation, that the innocent party should receive back the guilty, *may* spring from a deep sense of the forgiveness which sinners, who have themselves been forgiven, should extend one to another, yet most often it does spring from an unworthy apprehension of marriage, from a slight sense of the reality of the wrong that has been inflicted, of the sanctity that has been violated.

Ver. 33—37.—This prohibition, apparently absolute, of all swearing perplexed Augustine a good deal, and this he takes occasion more than once to confess.\* He feels that the prohibition cannot be as absolute as it seems; that the oath, or calling of God to be a witness of the truth, or an avenger of the falsehood spoken, cannot in itself be sinful, since rather it is a religious act, the testimony of a faith in a righteous and living God. Moreover he finds that God himself swears;† as at Ps. cix. 4; Gen. xxii. 16; Num. xiv. 28;‡ many, too, of his servants,

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\* *Serm.* 180. c. 4: Scio difficilem questionem, et caritati vestræ fateor, semper illam vitavi.

† Sometimes however, as *Enarr. in Ps.* lxxxviii. 4, he denies that this is in point, saying; Deus solus securus jurat, quia falli non potest. But since the perjury is in the intention, not in the mere sounds that proceed from the lips, the man who does not wish to deceive might in this respect just as securely swear as God, who is not able to be deceived.

‡ He might have added the *σὺ ἐπας* of our Lord, (Matt. xxvi. 64,) which is in the strictest sense an oath; since according to the Hebrew manner, it was the proposer, and not the taker of the oath, who repeated its words.

and in some of the holiest moments of their lives; (thus St. Paul, Rom. i. 9; 1 Cor. xv. 31; 2 Cor. i. 23; Gal. i. 20;) and these cannot be transgressions on their parts.\* He himself, when he found that an oath would give strength to the words which he spoke, and charity made him greatly to desire that they should be implicitly believed, was in the habit of confirming them by an appeal to the present and all-seeing God;† and though, as he says, he did this ever with a solemn awe, yet his moral sense told him he was not sinning herein.

But what then does our Lord mean by this “*Swear not at all*”? He is often content to answer, that it is a counsel of prudence. He who swears often *may* escape falling into perjury, but he who swears never cannot fall into it; as you *may be* delivered from falling over a precipice, even though you walk on its very edge; but you come not into a possible danger of this fall, if you put an ample space between you and it.‡

It is not wonderful that Augustine should feel himself

\* *De Mendac.* c. 15: Præcepti violati reum Paulum, præsertim in Epistolis conscriptis atque editis ad spiritalem vitam salutemque populorum, nefas est dicere.

† *Serm.* 180. c. 9.

‡ *Serm.* 180; *Ep.* 157. c. 5; *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 17: Sicut enim falsum loqui non potest, qui non loquitur; sic pejerare non potest, qui non jurat. *Serm.* 307. c. 3: Non est peccatum, verum jurare, sed quia grande peccatum est, falsum jurare, longe est a peccato falsum jurandi, qui omnino non jurat: propinquat falsæ jurationi, qui vel verum jurat. Dominus ergo, qui prohibuit jurare, supra ripam te noluit ambulare, ne pes tuus in angusto labatur, et cadas.

little content with a reply such as this, which indeed could satisfy nobody. But surely this would be a truer point of view from which to contemplate the words,—a view, as will be seen by the two or three next quotations, not altogether strange to Augustine, though he has not wrought it consistently out. There were, we know, whole worlds of mischief at work among our Lord's hearers and contemporaries with regard to oaths: as first, that some were more binding than others; that those made to the Lord must indeed be performed, while of those by the altar and the gift on the altar, by the temple and the gold in the temple, some indeed did oblige, while others were nugatory; and the spiritual rulers of the people, blind leaders of the blind, had made a scale of the obligation of these several oaths on the consciences of men. (Matt. xxiii. 16—22.) Then, too, men had learned to think that if only God's *name* were avoided, there was no irreverence in the frequent oaths "*by heaven*," "*by the earth*," "*by Jerusalem*," by their own heads—and these brought in on the slightest need, or on no need whatsoever; just as now-a-days men who would not be wholly profane will substitute for the Name of God sounds that nearly resemble, but are not exactly it, or the name, it may be, of some heathen deity; and this out of a lingering respect for that Holy Name.

Our Lord, then, with all this before his eyes, addresses that listening crowd, not abolishing, but here too filling out, the commandment given by Moses. You have heard long ago the sanctity of the judicial oath, and of that taken

upon solemn occasions, and in the express name of God. Moses forbade all rash and all false swearing by that awful Name. But I forbid light irreverent adjurations of every kind, and at every time,—adjurations so lightly spoken and so lightly broken. I banish them altogether, and from every region of your life.\* The “*at all*” which perplexes Augustine so much, and has perplexed so many, is doubtless to be interpreted and limited by what immediately follows. *All these kinds of oaths*, which I specify, are forbidden you. You do not, by using them, really avoid taking God’s Name in vain. For why have these oaths anything binding? It is God’s presence in these created things which gives them any hold over your consciences. If you swear by heaven, you have not escaped the swearing by his Name, for heaven is his throne—if by the earth, it is his footstool—by Jerusalem, it is the city of the great King—if by your head, as supposing that there at least you are swearing by something which is your own, yet it is not so; that is God’s workmanship, you could not of your own power make one hair of it black or white.† So that every oath is an awful thing, and in its ultimate ground rests upon God, though the

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\* *Serm.* 180. c. 10: *Istam ergo consuetudinem quotidianam crebram, sine causâ, nullo extorquente, nullo de tuis verbis dubitante, jurandi, avertite a vobis, amputate a linguis vestris, circumcidite ab ore vestro.*

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 17: *Quid enim poterat quisque magis ad se pertinere arbitrari quam caput suum? Sed quomodo nostrum est, ubi potestatem faciendi unius capilli albi aut nigri non habemus?*

lightness and frivolity of men causes them willingly to conceal this fact from their eyes.

And then He opens to them the deep mystery of the oath, that it is a consequence of sin; not itself evil, but “*of evil* ;”\* so that in the highest idea of intercourse, as between unfallen beings, angels with angels, it could find no place: it would be utterly inconceivable. Only where the tree of life has been forsaken for the mournful yet wondrous teaching of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, only where the lie has come forth, could there be any word for the truth. Were all speech the exact out-coming of the inner life, were there never any gulf between that and this, there could be no form of speech which would carry greater assurance than another. He that demands an oath recognizes the untruthfulness of man; he does not indeed affirm that he of whom he demands it would now speak falsehood without it; but only that in him, and in himself, and in every man, is that which, but for the ever newly-awakened sense of a standing in the presence of God, the all-seeing and the all-avenging, would lead to untruth; that nothing but God, and the awful sense of God’s presence among them, can keep men true; so that in this respect the oath is a deeply religious act, a confession that God is true, and only in God can man be

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\* *De Mendacio*, c. 18: A malo alterius, cui non aliter videtur persuaderi posse quod dicitur, nisi jurando fides fiat, aut ab illo malo nostro, quod hujus mortalitatis adhuc pellibus involuti cor nostrum non valemus ostendere: quod utique si valeremus, juratione opus non esset.



other than a liar. Yet not the less it "*cometh of evil*," since men ought not to need, and but for their first great departure from God would not need, thus continually to be brought back into his presence, in the presence of whom they ought continually to dwell. And the oath disappears wherever there is any near approximation to this. The true ideal of Christian conversation, that toward which the Church is continually striving, that to which multitudes of God's saints have already arrived in all their intercourse one with another, is that in which the oath *has* become superfluous, in which the Yea and Nay are all that are ever offered or asked, each one being entirely confident that the other is always speaking as though God heard him. After this sincerity, this entire truthfulness of conversation one with another, the Lord would have his disciples strive, and to this attain. Let guile and deceit cease from among you, and the oath will cease also; for it is "*of evil*," of *your* evil; and only that renders it so frequently offered, and so frequently required.

Ver. 38.—Here is again the apparent difficulty of harmonizing the new and old; the appearance as though Christ did not intend to do so, did not mean to put his legislation in connexion with, but rather in opposition to, the legislation of Moses; and with this difficulty, the temptation to forsake the true explanation for the easy one—for that, I mean, which seems easy at first, but which yet presently will involve him that snatches at it in



infinite perplexities and contradictions. Augustine's dispute with the Manichæans must have brought him early to a consciousness of this. They, of course, gladly seized on this passage,\* as another proof of the manner in which Christ sought to dissociate and disconnect his teaching from the teaching of the Old Testament; as if He were here saying, They of old time taught one thing, but I teach another: they encouraged retaliation; but I denounce it, and in its place require the extreme forgiveness of injuries. But the true explanation is, that the different precepts belong to different domains of man's life; and Christ is bringing the inner domain of man's life under *his* law, while Moses had been satisfied with bringing the outward under the dominion of his. But that outward is not abolished in one jot or tittle of it, by the new law of love. It is still "*an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth*," not always in this form exactly, but the *spirit* of all law which is exercised in a Christian State is retributive and avenging, and approximating more or less to this. Neither does it herein sink or obscure its character as a *Christian* State, but rather asserts it the more. The civil magistrate is a revenger to execute justice. God has appointed him to be such; and without such a witness, all sense of righteousness and of judgment would quickly perish from the world.

Moreover, as Augustine observes,† it is monstrous to

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\* See *Con. Adim.* c. 8.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 25: Quandoquidem et illud antiquum ad

adduce this precept, "*an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth,*" as fostering revenge, that is, private animosity and hate. For, he asks, is the natural man, is the enraged savage, satisfied with inflicting on his foe *as much* as he has suffered? No; his desire is ever to inflict *more*; to return two, or twenty it may be, for the one which he has received; thus a second time disturbing the balance of equity, though in the other scale,—and so himself losing, and causing his adversary, under the sense of an unmerited amount of injury, to lose, the sense of a righteous government in the world, according to which every transgression of law will recoil on the transgressor, and receive its just recompence of reward. But this law, which took the execution of the vengeance out of the hands of the man who might be tempted to mar it, by overdoing it, or doing it in hatred and personal enmity, was not a fostering, but

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reprimendas flammas odiorum, sævientiumque immoderatos animos refrenandos, ita præceptum est. Quis enim tantundem facile contentus est reponere vindictæ, quantum accepit injuriæ? Nonne videmus homines leviter læsos moliri cædem, sitire sanguinem, vixque invenire in malis inimici unde satientur? Quis pugno percussus non aut judicia concitat in damnationem ejus qui percusserit, aut si ipse repercutere velit, totum hominem, si non etiam telo aliquo arrepto, pugnis calcibusque contundit? Huic igitur immoderatae ac per hoc injustæ ultioni, lex justum modum figens, pœnam talionis instituit: hoc est, ut qualem quisque intulit injuriam, tale supplicium pendant. Proinde, Oculum pro oculo, dentem pro dente, non fomes sed limes furoris est; non ut id quod sopitum erat, inde accenderetur, sed ne id quod ardebat, ultra extenderetur, impositus. Est enim quædam justa vindicta, justeque debetur ei qui fuerit passus injuriam: unde utique cum ignoscimus, de nostro quodammodo jure largimur. Cf. *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. l. c. 19.

a limiting, and in its measure a subduing, the evil of man's heart. It did not indeed implant there a principle of love, nor yet certainly secure that they who availed themselves of it should be pure from all motives of private hate, and inspired only by a zeal for God's outraged justice, and a desire to make an offending brother recognize the law against which he had been sinning: it might be only a righteousness of the unrighteous.\* But still (as a preparation at least) it was working in this line, until a higher Lawgiver should come, and teach that besides this law of righteousness, there was a law of love which He would write in the hearts of his people, and which would teach them that, where only selfish interests were perilled, every thing was to be forgiven, every thing to be forgone;—even as this law of love would teach them the harder lesson yet of carrying out, where need was, the justice at once retributive and corrective, of God,†—and this, without the slightest feeling that herein they were suspending the law of love, or rendering to the man evil for his evil, but rather still good for his evil, inasmuch as

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cviii. 4*: Quæ, si dici potest, injustorum justitia est.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. l. l. c. 20*: Neque hic ea vindicta prohibetur, quæ ad correctionem valet: etiam ipsa enim pertinet ad misericordiam . . . Sed huic vindictæ referendæ non est idoneus, nisi qui odium quo solent flagrare qui se vindicare desiderant, dilectionis magnitudine superaverit. *Enarr. in Ps. cviii. 5*: [Deus] autem etiam cum vindicat, non reddit malum pro malo, quoniam justum reddit injusto. Quod autem justum est, utique bonum est. Punit ergo non delectatione alienæ miseriæ, quod est, malum pro malo; sed dilectione justitiæ, quod est, bonum pro malo.

it is justice for his injustice, right for his wrong. Truly a hard thing, yet not an impossible, rightly to do.

Ver. 39.—This command to “*resist not evil*,” and the others of like import which are scattered through the Gospels, but which lie the closest in this discourse, are open to abuse upon two sides. There is, first, the abuse of the Quaker, who demands that there should be throughout a cleaving to the letter, and who affirms that it is nothing but cowardice and a shrinking from the strictness of Christ’s law, which prevents these precepts of his from being literally obeyed. Augustine meets this assertion, first historically, showing that neither did the Lord himself, nor yet his apostles, whom none can refuse to accept as the authoritative interpreters of the word spoken, hold themselves bound in every case to the letter of these commandments. For instance, when the servant of the High Priest struck Jesus with the palm of his hand, our blessed Lord did not offer himself to be stricken again, but firmly, though mildly, rebuked the smiter. (John xviii. 22, 23.) And St. Paul spake a yet sterner word to that judge who unrighteously bade *him* to be stricken: “God shall smite *thee*, thou whited wall.” (Acts xxiii. 3.)\* Then, further, he refutes this interpretation by showing how such a cleaving to the letter of this and similar precepts, will continually issue in a violation of the spirit of Christ’s commandments. Thus, in the case of that man

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\* *De Mendac.* c. 15; *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 19.

that dared to lift up his hand against the Lord, to have offered him the other cheek, would have been no love, for it would have been a tempting of him to repeat his fearful offence.\* Again, because it is said, "Give to every man that asketh of thee," (Luke vi. 30,) am I therefore to give an open knife to an infant,—a drawn sword to a madman or a murderer,—money to him who, as I well know, will surely spend it in riot and excess? Because it is said "*Resist not evil*;" are therefore the merciless and the destroyers to be allowed to tread the world under their feet, and the righteous to do nothing to stay them?

No; it is clear this cannot be the meaning; it must be that our Lord is giving here laws for the inward spirit of man.† This offering of the other cheek is an inward

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\* *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 113. § 4: Hic dicet aliquis, Cur non fecit quod ipse præcepit? Percutienti enim non sic respondere, sed maxillam debuit alteram præbere. Quid quod et veraciter mansuete justequè respondit, et non solum alteram maxillam iterum percussuro, sed totum corpus figendum præparavit in ligno? Et hinc potius demonstravit, quod demonstrandum fuit, sua scilicet magna illa præcepta patientiæ, non ostentatione corporis, sed cordis præparatione facienda. Fieri enim potest ut alteram maxillam visibiliter præbeat homo, et iratus. Quanto ergo melius et respondet vere placatus, et ad perferenda graviora tranquillo animo fit paratus?

† *Ep.* 138. c. 2: Denique ista præcepta magis ad præparationem cordis, quæ intus est, pertinere, quam ad opus quod in aperto fit; ut teneatur in secreto animi patientia cum benevolentia, in manifesto autem id fiat quod eis videtur prodesse posse, quibus bene velle debemus, hinc liquido ostenditur, quod ipse Dominus Jesus, exemplum singulare patientiæ, cum percuteretur in faciem, respondit, Si male dixi, exprobra de malo: si autem bene, quid me cædis? Nequaquam igitur præceptum suum, si verba intueamur, implevit . . . et tamen

thing, is the meekness of the spirit under wrong, the preparedness of heart to bear as much or more, if so any good may come to the injurious person. But Christian love and prudence are in each case to decide whether it is also a precept for the outward conduct. It may be so; it will often be so; for instance, if thou thinkest that thy offending brother will be won by thy Christian patience, and his evil overcome by this exhibition of thy good, then it will be thy duty, if he has done thee one wrong, to lay thyself open to a second outrage: if thou hopest thus to teach him the worthlessness of the things after which he is striving, to let him spoil thee again.\* Deal with him as a prudent keeper will sometimes deal with a madman in his charge, giving way to and humouring him in part; or as a compassionate physician, that contradicts not his patient in the delirium of his fever.† But if thou countest that his evil will grow with its impunity, that he will strengthen himself in his sin, and therefore in his misery, through thy forbearance, then it is thy duty to turn to him thy love on its severer side, to repress the outcomings of his evil,‡ though it will be the same love that dictates

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paratus venerat, non solum in faciem percuti, verum etiam pro his quoque a quibus hæc patiebatur crucifixus occidi, pro quibus ait in cruce pendens, Pater, ignosce illis, quia nesciunt quid faciant.

\* *Ep.* 138. c. 2: Qui ergo vincit bono malum, patienter amittit temporalia commoda, ut doceat quam pro fide atque justitiâ contemnenda sint, quæ ille nimis amando fit malus.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 19.

‡ *Ep.* 138. c. 2: Cui licentia iniquitatis eripitur, utiliter vincitur: quoniam nihil est infelicius felicitate peccantium, quâ pœnalis nutritur



this conduct or the other. Thus in a State which is really Christian, war itself will be no violation of charity, but will be carried on in the spirit of love, that those against whom it is waged may not be allowed to make miserable themselves and others, that henceforth it may be more happily consulted for them, than they would else have consented to consult for themselves.\* Nor indeed are God's sharpest punishments of men, so long at the least as their state of trial last, other than such outcomings of his infinite pity, which would fain chasten now, that it may not be obliged to condemn hereafter.†

From all this it will appear, that while Augustine denies that the literal, or what calls itself the literal, scheme of interpretation, is to be painfully cleaved to, yet it is not because this is too high, too loving, and too large, but because it oftentimes would not be high, or large, or loving enough. Thus, for instance, a sparing might oftentimes be no true mercy, nor grow out of any root of love, but might only be an indulgence of our own indolence, or sloth, or cowardice.‡ So that in thus interpreting he in

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impunitas, et mala voluntas velut hostis interior roboratur. *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 20: Posse peccatum amore potius vindicari, quam impunitum relinqui.

\* *Ep.* 138. c. 2: Si terrena ista respublica præcepta Christiana custodiat, et ipsa bella sine benevolentia non gerentur, ut ad pietatis justitiæque pacatam societatem victis facilius consulatur.

† *Serm.* 171. c. 4.

‡ *Ep.* 153: Plurimum interest quo animo quisque parcat. Sicut enim est aliquando misericordia puniens, ita et crudelitas parcens. And he proceeds to give examples of this. Cf. *Con. Petil.* l. 2. c. 67:

no way favours, but goes directly against, the glosses which the world makes on these sayings of our Saviour's, and which it willingly believes to be the only alternatives, if the literal application be forsaken. What the world says, or, when it dares not say, what it thinks in its heart, is very nearly as follows:—This all is very fine morality, only it is unhappily *superfine*, and quite unfit for everyday work and wear;—these precepts are evidently pitched at too high a key for practical use; and must be taken down a little before they will actually serve the needs of men: it could never be meant that we are to be *so* meek, *so* forgiving, *so* ready to impart as this; that were only to make ourselves a prey: these are extreme sayings; and it will be enough, if we make some approximation, nearer or more remote, to the conduct here enjoined.—But no: it is not thus: the commands are to stand fast evermore in all their breadth and fulness: their only limitation is this, that love and the Spirit of God are in each case to be their interpreters, to apply them to the emergent necessity. Where this love and this Spirit are wanting, the precept *must* be interpreted falsely: if in the letter, it will be in a loveless form; or, if that be forsaken, then there will be a sinning against the letter and the spirit alike.

Ver. 40, 41.—These verses Augustine brings into comparison with the precept of St. Paul, “redeeming the

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*Sicut est plerumque crudelis fallax adulatio, sic semper misericors justa correptio. Cf. In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract. 7.*

time, because the days are evil," (Ephes. v. 16,) that is, as he understands it, *purchasing* time, with all its precious advantages, at the cost of meaner things. Give up those meaner things, even though they be thine by right; give thy coat, and thy cloak too, rather than lose thy time, time lent thee for working out thy salvation, in too eagerly seeking to regain them.\* To enter into the meaning of that very difficult passage would be alien to the present purpose; yet it is generally agreed that this is not exactly its meaning, and so that there is no true parallel here. That may be, and indeed certainly is, a counsel of Christian *prudence*, but this is otherwise. Rather we have here, in the form of an outward precept, a law for the inward spirit of a Christian man; and one, as Augustine has himself so often and so distinctly declared, to be, or not to be, literally carried out by him according to the varying necessities of the brother that may sin against him. It may be thou canst teach him the higher lesson by letting him have the thing he is unduly snatching at: let him have it then: count his soul more precious than thy worldly goods. But the precept does not necessarily exclude the other dealing of love. It may be what now he most needs to learn is, that unrighteousness is not to carry the day unreprieved even in this present evil time, that "the way of the transgressors is hard." Then thou

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\* *Serm.* 167. c. 4: *Judicio vult tecum contendere, . . . vult avocare te litibus a Deo tuo. . . Quantum ergo melius est ut nummum amittas, et tempus redimas.*

art bound by the same law of love to resist him, and to make him feel that there is a divine order even in the midst of this sinful world; an order which he cannot violate at will, which, though it look so weak, is indeed mighty,—which if he infringe, it will surely assert and avenge itself. For as God dealt with men by law and by Gospel, and the same love was in each, as the law punished and the Gospel forgave, each for the bringing about an end beyond themselves, and the same end, even the righteousness of the sinner, though they sought it by ways so different, so will there be counterparts to both in the wise and loving conduct of a Christian man toward his offending brother.\* The everlasting rule is, that thou render good for thy brother's evil: the shape in which thou shalt render it, love, which means not however merely the unwillingness to inflict present pain, shall prescribe.

Exactly so, too, will it be in a Christian State. The judge, indeed, being the representative but of one side of the divine character, of the divine justice, does not pardon, but only acquits or condemns. The king, however, is a larger mirror of the divine perfections, of grace no less than of justice: he, therefore, after the condemnation, is free to pardon. It was this, the *kingly* function which our Lord exercised when he let the woman taken in

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\* In this matter it is not possible beforehand to give any other rule than that which Augustine himself gives, when he says, *Dilige, et fac quod voles.*

adultery go free. (John viii. 11.) He did not thereby act against his own law, given by Moses, which had said that such should be stoned: He only completed it.\* The idea upon which her pardon, upon which every pardon pronounced by the monarch as the fountain of grace in the land, rests, is that it will bring about in him that is the object of it a truer righteousness than the payment of the extreme penalty would have done, that there is something in him which promises that the end which punishment was to reach will more surely be attained by the method of grace. Were it otherwise, the true love would be to suffer the punishment to take its course. So that here, too, justice and grace appear as identical, as love, manifesting itself now at its one pole, now at the other. It is true, indeed, that the grace comes out less frequently in the Christian State than in the Christian Church, that in the first it is ever the exception. For the State stands in many respects in relation to the Church, as the legal economy to the evangelical, an outer court of the same temple; and as in that earlier economy the side of grace came out less prominently than that of severe justice, so is it in the State also, which yet knows, as that knew, of the one as well as the other.†

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. l. 5*: Numquid Christus fecit contra legem suam? . . . Non ergo Deus contra legem suam, quia nec imperator contra leges suas facit, quando confessis dat indulgentiam. Moyses minister legis, Christus promulgator legis; Moyses lapidat ut iudex, Christus indulget ut rex.

† A long letter of Augustine's to a civil ruler, (*Ep. 153, ad*

Ver. 42.—Hitherto, Augustine observes, it has been the more negative virtues of not injuring, and being patient under the injuries of others, which the Lord has urged on his disciples. But this were little, unless the more active and communicative graces were added also; and so follows the precept, “*Give to him that asketh thee.*” But can this, he inquires, mean, that no request is ever to be denied? Was Joseph, then, to give to the wife of Potiphar what she asked? or Susannah to the Jewish elders? Shall I give money to a man to help him in oppressing the innocent? or which I know that he will spend upon his sinful lusts?\* It is plain that a thousand other monstrous cases of the kind might be cited, down to that of the Carpocratians, who justified indulgence in all fleshly lusts by these words, saying, Whatever the flesh asked, they were bound to give to it.

Clearly, then, the command must have its limitation somewhere. Augustine finds the limitation in the words themselves:—*Give to every man; but not every thing.*† If you send an unworthy beggar away with a lecture upon idleness, you have sent him “not empty away.” You

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*Macedon.*) justifying the Church in its frequent pleadings for the pardon of criminals, is full of matter of the deepest interest on these relations of the Church and State, and of the love whereof punishment no less than pardon is, according to its true idea, the utterance.

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 20.

† *Serm.* 359: *Omni petenti te da. Non est dictum, Omnia petenti te da: Prorsus da; et si non quod petit, tu tamen aliquid da: malum petit, tu bona da.*



have given to him, although not the very thing which he required. Here, too, he observes, we have the Lord's own interpretation of his words. When that suitor cried to Him from the crowd, "Master, speak to my brother, that he divide the inheritance with me;" and the Lord made answer, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?"—might it not appear that He forgot his own precept, refusing even this easily granted request which was made to Him? But it was not so; He gave the man, not indeed what he asked, but something far better, a medicine for the hurt of his soul, in that warning word: "Take heed and beware of covetousness."\* (Luke xii. 13, 15.) So, too, Joseph gave, but it was a counsel of chastity; for when he made answer, How shall I, a servant, betray the confidence of my lord? (Gen. xxxix. 8, 9,) in that was involved much more an exhortation to her, How wilt thou, a wife, betray the yet higher confidence of thine husband? The command then, "*Give*," as interpreted by the life of Him who uttered it, is ever to stand fast, but it is, Give that which will make the receiver truly richer; and often in this sense a seeming denial will be the most real giving,† as on the other side there

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\* *Serm.* 359: Non dedit Dominus hoc, nec tamen nihil dedit. Minus negavit, sed quod plus est donavit . . . Ergo hanc regulam tenete. Date quando petimini, et si non hoc quod petimini. Hoc fecit Dominus. Petebat ille. Quid? Divisionem hæreditatis. Dedit Dominus. Quid? Peremptionem cupiditatis . . . Nunquid peti-torem inanem dimisit, et non potius veritate implevit?

† *Enchir. de Fide, Spe, et Car.* c. 72: Non solum ergo qui dat

are gifts which are no gifts, which as it was wrong to ask, so would it have been far better never to have received. He who gives these does not really give; and while he seems to be keeping the letter of this, is indeed breaking the spirit of all Christ's commandments.

So much concerning the interpretation which this precept is to have: on its details Augustine does not yield us much; yet he notes how the Lord has instanced, as examples of the things whereof a disciple of his shall patiently, where need is, endure the loss, some that are most necessary, the cloak and the coat, that so He may implicitly involve all others: for if these, how much more readily the superfluous, shall be forgone.\*

Ver. 43—45.—Here also Augustine has seized with a firm grasp that which can alone be the right interpretation of these verses. In respect of those words, "*Thou shalt hate thine enemy*," he does not, to withdraw the passage from Manichæan calumnies, betake himself to the poor evasion, that because the exact words are not found in the Old Testament, therefore the Lord is here pointing not at

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esurienti cibum, sitiendi potum, nudo vestimentum, et quod cuique necessarium est indigenti, verum etiam qui emendat verbere in quem potestas datur, vel coërcet aliquâ disciplinâ, et tamen peccatum ejus, quo ab illo læsus et offensus est, dimittit ex corde, vel orat ut ei dimittatur, non solum in eo quod dimittit atque orat, verum etiam in eo quod corripit, et aliquâ emendatoriâ pœnâ plectit, eleemosynam dat, quia misericordiam præstat.

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 19: Si enim de necessariis hoc imperatum est, quanto magis superflua contemnere convenit?

an Old Testament precept, but at a Pharisaical abuse of such, denouncing some addition to it which the Scribes had falsely made. Be the words in the Old Testament or no, they express the spirit of it; and no one need shrink from allowing this, if only he will keep in mind that they were addressed to Israel solely as the theocratic people, as having therefore no enemies but those who also were God's enemies,\*—to hate them therefore, but only as God hated,—to hate, that is, the evil in them, and not any thing besides. The precept was no concession to man's weakness,† but a summons to holiness, to a keeping themselves unspotted from the world that surrounded them. Let us understand this, and then we shall see that the divine legislator of the New Covenant does not intend to repeal this any more than the preceding commandments

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\* *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 24: Unusquisque iniquus homo, in quantum iniquus est, odio habendus est; in quantum autem homo est, diligendus est; ut illud quod in eo recte odimus arguamus, id est, vitium, quo possit illud quod in eo recte diligimus, id est, humana natura ipsa, emendato vitio, liberari . . . Audito igitur et non intellecto quod antiquis dictum erat, Oderis inimicum tuum, ferebantur homines in hominis odium, cum deberent non odisse nisi vitium. Hos corrigit Dominus, dicendo, Diligite inimicos vestros, ut, qui jam dixerat, Non veni legem solvere, sed adimplere, ideoque de odio inimici quod scriptum est in lege, non solveret, præcipiendo utique ut diligamus inimicos, cogeret nos intelligere quonam modo possemus unum eundemque hominem et odisse propter culpam, et diligere propter naturam.

† Even Augustine himself does not always hold fast to this the one right exposition; as, for instance, when, *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 21, he says: Nec quod in lege dictum est, Oderis inimicum tuum, vox jubentis justo accipienda est, sed permittentis infirmo.

of Moses. "*Thou shalt hate thine enemy*" still stands firm,—"*thine enemy*," because God's enemy; there shall be in thee the abhorrence of evil, the holy hatred of sin; though now He adds out of the rich treasure-house of his grace another power, that of loving the man, even while we hate the evil that is in him;—all which he illustrates by the practice of the physician, who out of the very good will that he has to the sick man does the more hate and make war against the sickness by which he is holden.\*

He often takes occasion to remark how side by side with these passages, which they who misunderstood them, wilfully or otherwise, would have to encourage hatred, to countenance revenge, there were innumerable passages even in the Old Testament, (dawn-streaks of the coming day,) breathing the spirit of these new precepts of Christ; however the strength to fulfil them may have been for the most wanting, till He came to give it.† Thus he compares with the restraint upon anger, (Matt. v. 22,) the words at Prov. xvi. 34. The adultery of *the heart* which the Lord denounces (Matt. v. 28) is equally met and forbidden in the Old Testament, which has not merely its

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\* *Serm. 272 (Appendix):* Quod cum sancto et pio animo feceris, vices cœlestis Medici agis, odio habens morbum, et diligens ægrotum.

† *Con. Faust.* l. 19. c. 28—30: Omnia vel pæne omnia, quæ monuit seu præcepit ubi adjungebat, Ego autem dico vobis, inveniuntur et in illis veteribus libris. It is worth while to compare Tertullian, (*Adv. Marc.* l. 4. c. 14—17,) who is dealing with the same great question, and asserting against the Gnostics, as Augustine against the Manichæans, the one spirit which pervades the Old Testament and the New.

seventh, but its tenth commandment: "Thou shalt not *covet* thy neighbour's wife." The love of enemies is enjoined, Prov. xxv. 21; and in the law itself, where it is written: "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again;" (Exod. xxiii. 4, 5;) while some of God's chosen saints, a Joseph and a David, (1 Sam. xxiv. 5; Ps. vii. 4,) give noble examples of it in their lives. The ground of this love being the goodness of God to all, has its parallel, Wisd. xii. 1. The indissolubility of marriage is declared, Gen. ii. 24, of which words we know the use made by the Lord himself. (Matt. xix. 4.) When the Manichæans fastened upon sayings like this, "*He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good,*" and argued that He who said this, or He of whom this was said, could never be the same God whose severity in word and act came so fearfully out in the Old Testament, Augustine answers, that neither is the Old Testament without its frequent declarations of God's inexhaustible mercy, his patience, his love, nor yet the New without its abundant announcements and instances of his severity and anger; he quotes in evidence, Matt. x. 28; xxii. 13; xxv. 41; Rom. i. 24; ii. 5; Heb. xii. 29; Luke xix. 27; 2 Cor. v. 3; Acts v. 5.\* It was true that there was more of fear in the Old Testa-

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\* *Con. Adim.* c. 7: Ex quo facile apparet et in eâ patientiâ quæ invitat ad pœnitentiam; et in eâ indulgentiâ, quæ ignoscit pœnitentibus; et in eâ justitiâ quæ punit eos qui corrigi nolunt, utrumque Testamentum convenire atque congruere, tanquam ab uno Deo utrumque conscriptum. Cf. *Con. Adv. Leg. et Proph.* l. 1. c. 16—18.

ment, and more of love in the New,\* yet was there each in either; and it was only by a directing of the attention of the simple exclusively to the one side or the other, that they could be set in contrary lights, and thus played off against each other.†

In regard of any difficulty from passages where the saints and servants of God appear to be seeking and longing after vengeance upon their enemies, such difficulty exists quite as much in passages of the New Testament as the Old. How, for instance, shall we understand Rev. vi. 9, where the souls under the altar exclaim, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” Augustine is perplexed by this and similar utterances. But who, he concludes, shall presume to say that this is not a prayer against the kingdom of sin, under which they suffered such things; and which kingdom the very charity which

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\* *Con. Adim.* c. 22: Sicut enim tempore caritatis bonitas, sic tempore timoris severitas Dei maxime commendatur. *De Mor. Eccles.* c. 28: Quanquam enim utrumque in utroque sit, prævalet tamen in Vetere timor, amor in Novo.

† *Con. Adv. Leg. et Proph.* l. 1. c. 17: Vaniloqui et mentis seductores adversantes litteris sacris, quas intelligere nolunt, eligunt ex eis aspera quæ ibi leguntur ad commendandam severitatem Dei, et de litteris Evangelicis atque Apostolicis lenia quæ ibi leguntur ad commendandam bonitatem Dei; et apud homines imperitos hinc ingerunt horrorem, inde quærunt favorem; quasi difficile sit, ut quisquam similiter blasphemus atque impius, eo modo adversetur Novo Testamento, quo isti Veteri, carpens de Vetere quibus ibi commendatur Dei bonitas, et e contrario de Novo quibus ibi commendatur Dei severitas.



now is theirs, makes them so to desire and pray that it may be overthrown.\* Again, there are St. Paul's reasons for doing good to an enemy: "In so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head;" (Rom. xii. 20;) which at first sight, and as some have interpreted them,† seem to contain rather the precepts of a subtler hatred than of purest love. The image has been explained thus: Do thine enemy good, for thus thou wilt draw down on him, supposing him to continue in his enmity, a more signal vengeance from heaven. But this would not be, as South well and wittily remarks, loving our enemy, but only hating him more artificially. Or else thus: Do thine enemy good, for so thou wilt bring upon him the smart of a livelier pain, of a stronger self-rebuke, of a deeper self-scorn. This last explanation is on the way to the right one, but, stopping here, is equally with the other opposed as much to the universal spirit, as to the present argument, of St. Paul; and Augustine, vindicating with a righteous earnestness the passage from any such covert malice, shows that the benefits are to be imparted, not with the purpose

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 1. c. 22: Nam ipsa est sincera et plena justitiæ et misericordiæ vindicta martyrum, ut evertatur regnum peccati, quo regnante tanta perpessi sunt.

† Some in his time did so abuse the passage: thus *Enarr. in Ps. lvi.* 10, he observes: [Malevolus] malitiose sapit quod scriptum est, Hoc enim faciens, carbones ignis congeres super caput ejus. Agit enim ut amplius aggravet et ei excitet indignationem Dei, quam carbonibus ignis significare putat, non intelligens illum ignem esse pœnitentiæ urentem dolorem, quousque caput erectum superbiâ beneficiis inimici ad humilitatem salubrem deponitur.

of aggravating an enemy's punishment, but for the bringing about in him of that true repentance, which shall, if it may be, avert the punishment altogether; that the "coals of fire" heaped upon the head are the image of a pain inflicted indeed, but yet inflicted in love, and for the burning out of the malice in the man,\* a present smart which is to issue in a lasting cure. For fear of a mistake, and for ever excluding one, the apostle, he observes, was diligent to add, himself interpreting what he just had spoken: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."†

He pauses to inquire whether this "*sun*" which God makes to rise on the evil as on the good, this "*rain*" which He sends on the unjust no less than the just, are to be taken literally,—a declaration of the natural bounties and blessings whereof all are partakers; or not rather the "*rain*" of his grace, the "*sun*" of his righteousness, (Mal. iv. 2,) with which he visits the hearts of all, though some are as soil which refuses to be softened by that rain, (Heb. vi. 7, 8,) or warmed by that sun. But he decides, and

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\* *Serm.* 149. c. 18: Ipsa vero ustio, pœnitentia est, quæ tanquam carbonem ignis, inimicitias ejus malitiasque consumit. Umbreit, in a valuable note on Prov. xxv. 22, takes quite the same ethical view of the command, but explains the image a little differently: Thou shalt make him to glow with shame; and Augustine, too, in one place, says that the enemy under this treatment *blushes*, (erubescit.)

† *Enarr. in Ps.* lxxviii. 10: Quomodo autem potest vincere in bono malum, in superficie bonus, et in alto malus, qui opere parcit, et corde sævit, manu mitis, voluntate crudelis? Cf. *De Doct. Christ.* l. 3. c. 16.

we cannot doubt rightly, in favour of the former explanation,\* for they are not “*evil*” upon whom the spiritual Sun has risen, but through his rising upon them have passed into the number of the “*good*,” nor they “*unjust*” upon whom this rain comes down, but are now the “*just*” through its fertilizing and refreshing powers. Rather this sun and this rain are the common mercies which all men receive,† even those that “walk in their own ways,” from whom He does not withhold “rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.” (Acts xiv. 16, 17.) And this unstinted bounty of God, this love which comprehends all, according to the measure in which they are capable of being comprehended by it, is the measure in which his people, those who would indeed show themselves “*the children of their Father which is in heaven*,” are to exercise love, the pattern which they are to set before them for imitation.

Ver. 46, 47.—There are three manners of returns, as Augustine sometimes observes, which men may make one to another. There is, first, the returning of good for good, and evil for evil, which is the principle which the world recognizes and on which it proceeds: “*Do not even*

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\* *Serm.* 58. c. 6; *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 23. In this view he brings out rightly the meaning of “*his sun*”: Addidit suum, id est, quem ipse fecit atque constituit, et a nullo aliquid sumsit ut faceret.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxv. 6.

*the publicans the same ?*"\* this is the rule of the natural man. But beneath this there is the returning of evil for good, which is devilish ; while above it there is the returning of good for evil, which is divine, which is God's principle of action ; and unto this the children of God are summoned here.†

Ver. 48. "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*"—This was a favourite text of the Pelagians, adduced by them in proof that men might live here altogether without sin. God, they said, would not have commanded what was impossible ; if perfection had been unattainable, Christ would not have required it. But Augustine‡ answers that we must know what this "*perfect*" means. It is not necessarily complete and having attained its ultimate end in everything ; but that may be perfect in one respect which is not perfect in another : or again, a man may be "*perfect*," as having every grace and lacking none, and yet imperfect, in that

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\* *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract. 8* : Extende dilectionem in proximos, nec voces illam extensionem. Prope enim te diligis, qui eos diligis, qui tibi adhærent. Extende ad ignotos, qui tibi nihil mali fecerunt. Transcende et ipsos, perveni ut diligas inimicos. *Serm. 273 (Appendix)* : Amas amantes te, filios et parentes. Amat et latro, amat et draco, amant et lupi, amant et ursi.

† This is drawn out somewhat differently, *Enarr. in Ps. cviii. 2*.

‡ *De Pecc. Mer. et Rem. l. 2. c. 15*. It may be seen, also, how he dealt with this and passages of the like kind, such as Deut. xviii. 13 ; 2 Cor. xiii. 11 ; Col. i. 28 ; Phil. ii. 14, in his treatise *De Perfect. Justit. c. 8, 9* ; he says of most of them : *Ipsium finem commemorant, quo currendo pertendant.*

he has them not in that intensity which the immutable law of truth requires. And here both these limitations find place. It is on an especial point the Lord is speaking: "*Be ye perfect:*" Love, that is, not merely your friends, but your enemies, stop not short at that easier love, but go on to the harder, fulfilling the course set before you, reaching to the end of your Christian course; and do this, because God does it. But he who asserts this to mean, Do all this in the measure in which God does it,—and believes this possible, declares, not that he has high notions of what man's love ought to be, but that he has most poor and unworthy notions of what God's love is. It was not that Augustine desired to cast a slight on any true strivings after added measures of Christian grace;\* but only on these theories of a sinless perfection, as detecting plainly the false root out of which they grew, that the Pelagian spoke of this perfection as within man's reach, not out of his stronger faith in the power of the grace which would bring it about, but out of his weaker conviction of the extent and malignity of the evil which was opposed to its attainment. His talk about this state of a perfect health was not an extolling of the medicine, but an extenuating and more or less a denying of the disease—an all-important distinction!

In the life to come, undoubtedly, this command would

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\* Rather his language is such as this (*Serm.* 169. c. 15): *Semper tibi displiceat quod es, si vis pervenire ad id quod nondum es. Nam ubi tibi placuisti, ibi remansisti. Si autem dixeris, Sufficit; et peristi. Semper adde, semper ambula, semper profice.*

beliterally and in all its extent fulfilled. God's people will be perfect, even as He is perfect: and yet not so, that the distinction between the nature of God and the nature of man will be abolished, as some appeared to him to affirm, but man will reach the perfection of his nature, as God has ever existed in the perfection of his.\*

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\* *Con. Maxim.* l. 1. c. 12: Ipse secundum naturam suam, nos secundum nostram. *Quæst. in Deut.* l. 5. qu. 9: Neque enim quia dictum est, Estote perfecti, sicut Pater vester cœlestis perfectus est, ideo æqualitatem Patris . . . sperare debemus: quamvis non defuerunt qui et hoc futurum putaverunt; nisi forte quid dicant parum intelligimus. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps.* xciv. 1.



## ST. MATTHEW, CHAP. VI.

VER. 1—4. The connexion of this part of the Sermon, on which we now are entering, with the preceding, Augustine traces thus. Hitherto the Lord has taught his disciples *what* they were to do; He now proceeds to teach them *how* they shall do it, with what simplicity and singleness of eye.\* And this teaching, he observes, is never superfluous; for even after the eye is in great part purged to see God, yet it is ever hard to prevent the creeping in of harmful influences, even where least suspected, and this from the very accompaniments of our good actions:† as, for instance, from the praises of men, which those will

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\* *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract. 8*: Videte quanta opera faciat superbia. Ponite in corde, quam similia faciat et quasi paria caritati. Pascit esurientem caritas, pascit et superbia; caritas ut Deus laudetur, superbia ut ipsa laudetur. Vestit nudum caritas, vestit et superbia. Jejumat caritas, jejumat et superbia . . . Ergo Scriptura divina intro nos revocat, a jactatione hujus faciei forinsecus . . . Redi ad conscientiam tuam, ipsam interroga. Noli attendere quod floret foris, sed quæ radix est interna. Radicata est cupiditas? species potest esse bonorum factorum: vere opera bona esse non possunt. Radicata est caritas? securus esto, nihil mali procedere potest. Blanditur superbia; sævit amor: . . . accipitur magis plaga caritatis, quam eleemosyna superbiae.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. 1. 2. c. 1*: Oculo magnâ ex parte mundato difficile est non subrepere sordes aliquas de his rebus, quæ ipsas bonas nostras actiones comitari solent, veluti est laus humana.

draw after them. And very usefully he brings out how, quite apart from the mere and utter hypocrite, who has no motive in any thing which he does but his own glory, there are many in whom there is a very great admixture of motives, whose good deeds have two sources, one pure and one sullied ; for whom, indeed, God and the pleasing of God is first ; yet the intention does not remain altogether in its simplicity ; there is also an eye turned aside to some meaner reward.\*

At the same time it is very important to observe, and he often observes, that the warning is throughout not against *having* the praise of men, but against the doing aught *that we may have* their praise, instead of with a single eye to God's glory. It is not, Take heed that ye be not seen in your alms ; but "*Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them.*" For in some sort we are bound in charity to desire men's praises ; that is, if there be good wrought by us, we are bound in love to desire there may be a recognition of that good on the part of others : since their failing to recognize it would mark a wrong condition in them. We are bound to desire that our conversation may be attractive, for we may thus sometimes at the same moment do a double alms, ministering to the rich man the example, to the poor the help, that he needs.† If our conscience tells us

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 2.

† *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract.* 8 : Si enim abscondis ab oculis hominis, abscondis ab imitatione hominis. Duo sunt quibus eleemosynam facis : duo esuriunt, unus panem, alter justitiam . . . Ille enim

that God's glory, and not pride or ostentation, is the root of our actions, let us be fearless in this matter, and not dread or even shun to be seen, only having a care that this shall not be the final aim of our deeds.\* And, here, he says, lies the reconciliation of such declarations as that of St. Paul, "I please all men in all things," (1 Cor. x. 33,) and that other in which he says, "If I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (Gal. i. 10.) I please men as a mean to an end, for the winning of them to the truth: I do not make the pleasing of them itself my end; on the contrary, this is something which I utterly forego whenever higher interests of God's truth are at stake. Yet his affecting words in his *Confessions*,† concerning the difficulty which he found when praised, in distinguishing whether the pleasure he felt was a pleasure that others should be glorifying God for the good which they saw in him, or a pleasure in being thus himself extolled and glorified, and the deep heart-searchings into which this doubt brought him, will not easily be forgotten by those who once have read them. He notes the peculiar difficulty which besets the faithful man here. In other matters he may avoid that which would prove the occasion of sin in him; he may put the temptation far from him; but he cannot here; for we may not get away

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quærit quod manducet, ille quærit quod imitetur. Pascis istum, præbes te isti: ambobus dedisti eleemosynam. Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 5. c. 14; and *Serm.* 159. c. 10—13.

\* *Enarr. in Ps.* LXV. 2.

† *Conf.* l. 10. c. 37.

from virtue, so to get away from the praises which follow it, and the temptations which follow those praises.

He continually finds an illustration of the warning here conveyed, lest snatching at an earthly we forfeit a heavenly reward, in the doom of the foolish virgins. (Matt. xxv.) In them he sees the image of persons, who like those noted here, are working for, and living on, the praises of men. These praises were as the present oil in the virgins' lamps, of which so long as the supply lasted, they were adorned with apparent good works. But when these praises fail, as at the last day they must fail, then for them everything will fail: all wherein they found their impulses to good will cease; and the good itself, such as it was, will cease likewise. Their oil has failed, and their lamps will have gone out. And for the past they will have already received and already exhausted their reward; what they laboured for they got; but now there will remain for them nothing but that sentence, "I know you not," uttered from his lips with whom no work avails which is not wrought out of love to Him.\*—In one place he wittily likens these boasters of their good deeds, who are thus losers of all true reward, to the hen, which has no sooner laid its egg, than by its cackling it calls some one to take it away.

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\* *Serm.* 93. c. 9: Non sunt fraudati laudibus humanis: quæsierunt laudes humanas, habuerunt. Istæ laudes humanæ in die iudicii non eos adjuvant. *Enarr. in Ps.* cxlvii. 13: Non inveniunt tunc faventes, non inveniunt tunc laudantes, a quibus solebant laudari et quasi excitari ad bona opera, non robore bonæ conscientiæ, sed incitamento linguæ alienæ.

Augustine has a laborious, and, as I cannot but think, an unnecessary discussion concerning what the "*left hand*" may mean, which is not to be permitted to know what the "*right hand*" does." It were better to recognize this as one of those strong popular sayings, which are not to be required to give an account of themselves in detail. They cannot do this, and it is in the very contradictions which would arise, if they were thus pressed, that the chief of their strength lies. Thus it is true, that if knowledge might be attributed to the hands at all, it would be impossible that the left hand should not know what the right hand gave, since both are organs of one and the same will; but this impossibility is not to make us quit the meaning which the words at first obviously suggest. Rather we are to see in this very impossibility, which lies on the surface of the precept, an exhortation involved to the greatest possible secrecy, or rather simplicity, in almsgiving;—for the secrecy is an accident, which in the nature of things must often be wanting, but the simplicity, the absence as far as possible of all reflex consciousness of and dwelling on the work, must always be there. After rejecting many explanations as untenable, he ends by explaining the "*left hand*" as the carnal desire, manifesting itself in the look turned sideways to the human praise and reward, whereas by the "*right hand*" is meant the single purpose of fulfilling the divine commands;\* and he makes the entire precept amount to

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\* *Serm.* 149. c. 14: Sinistra est animi cupiditas carnalis, dextera

this, Let not meaner motives mingle with and defile your higher. That this lesson underlies the whole teaching of Christ with which we now have to do, is plain: but assuredly He is giving here to his disciples rather an *example* of what He would have them do, than the *principle* on which they are to do it; since you are looking for an higher reward than the praises of men, let your alms be given in secret; (and this He clothes in a strong gnostic saying;) so secretly that, if that were possible, no part of yourselves save that actually engaged in the giving should know of the gift—not even the brother-hand.

Ver. 5, 6.—To these words, “*Enter into thy closet, and shut thy door,*” Augustine, without excluding the literal sense, and the warning against prayers made to be seen,\* gives also a mystical meaning. This “*closet*” or chamber is the heart of man; “*the door*” the avenues of sense by which disturbing and defiling thoughts of this world would enter in; a door, too, at which the tempter is ever knocking, who yet passes on and leaves us, if he finds it resolutely closed against him.† Then, he says,

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est animi caritas spiritalis. [Elsewhere, the left, the ipsa delectatio laudis—the right, the intentio implendi divina præcepta.] Si ergo cum quisque facit eleemosynam, miscet cupiditatem temporalium commodorum, ut in opere illo aliquid tale conquirat, miscet sinistræ conscientiam operibus dextræ. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. cxxxvi. 5.*

\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxli. 3*: Si homines reddituri sunt, effunde ante homines precem tuam: si Deus redditurus est, effunde ante eum precem tuam.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. 1. 2. c. 3*: Parum est intrare in cubi-



we fulfil the apostolic commandment, "Give no place to the devil," when we diligently close the heart's door against him, and against the crowd of distracting thoughts with which he is ever seeking to mar and spoil our prayers. On the shutting of the door in this sense he is often urgent, yet certainly not more urgent than the immense importance of the subject would warrant. Thus in one place he says, Wert thou speaking with me, and that, not asking a favour, but as with thine equal, and shouldst thou suddenly break off and give a message to thy servant, could I otherwise than esteem it an affront? Yet this is what thou doest daily with thy God.\* And in another

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cula, si ostium pateat importunis, per quod ostium ea quæ foris sunt improbe se immergunt, et interiora nostra appetunt. Foris autem diximus esse omnia temporalia et visibilia, quæ per ostium, id est, per carnalem sensum in cogitationes nostras penetrant, et turbâ vanorum phantasmatum orantibus obstrepunt. And elsewhere: Clauso ostio, id est, exclusâ phantasmatum turbâ. And *Enarr. in Ps. cxli. 3*: Tentator non cessat pulsare ut irrumpat; si clausum invenerit, transit. There is here much more that is admirable on this shutting of the heart's door.

\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxl. 5*: Quid facis de cogitationibus tuis? quid facis de tumultu et catervâ rebellantium desideriorum . . . . Confiteris peccata, Deum adoras: video corpus ubi jaceat, quæro ubi volitet animus. Modo si mecum loquereris, et subito averteres te ad servum tuum, et dimitteres me, non dico a quo aliquid petebas, sed cum quo ex æquo loquebaris, non mihi injuriam factam deputarem? Ecce quid facis quotidie Deo. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. lxxxv. 4*: Et tolerat Deus tot corda precantium, et diversas res cogitantium; omitto dicere et noxias, omitto dicere aliquando perversas et inimicas Deo; ipsas superfluas cogitare, injuria est ejus, cum quo loqui cœperas.

popular exposition\* he inquires why men are so reluctant to obey this command,—why they so seldom turn in upon the solitude of their own hearts,—why they so much prefer to be abroad than at home. And then he likens them to those that have uncomfortable households, and so are unwilling to return to their homes, while they know that only wretchedness and strife await them there. It would be otherwise if their hearts were pure, if their consciences were purged; they would not then find every thing driving them abroad, but rather every thing attracting them home.

Ver. 7, 8.—In his exquisitely beautiful letter upon prayer, addressed to the noble widow Proba, Augustine distinguishes between the “*much speaking*,” which is rebuked, and the much praying, which elsewhere the Lord

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. xxxiii. 5*: Attendat sanctitas vestra: Quomodo nolunt intrare domos suas qui habent malas uxores: quomodo exeunt ad forum et gaudent. Cœpit hora esse, quâ intrent in domum suam; contristantur. Intraturi sunt enim ad tœdia, ad murmura, ad amaritudines, ad eversiones. . . . Si ergo miseri sunt qui cum redeunt ad parietes suos, timent ne aliquibus suorum perturbationibus evertantur, quanto sunt miseriores, qui ad conscientiam suam redire nolunt, ne ibi litibus peccatorum evertantur? Ergo ut possis libens redire ad cor tuum, munda illud . . . Aufer inde cupiditatum sordes, aufer labem avaritiæ, aufer tabem superstitionum . . . aufer ista omnia; intra in cor tuum, et gaudebis ibi. Cum ibi cœperis gaudere, ipsa munditia cordis tui delectabit te, et faciet orare: quomodo si venias ad aliquem locum, silentium est ibi, forte quies est ibi, mundus est locus. Oremus hic, dicis, et delectat te compositio loci, et credis quod ibi te exaudiat Deus. Si ergo loci visibilis te delectat munditia, quare te non offendit immunditia cordis tui?

has so earnestly commanded. He who himself passed nights in prayer, who said, "*Seek, and ye shall find,*" and spake a parable "that men ought always to pray and not to faint," must be as far as possible from finding fault with prayer which is long drawn out, if only it *be* prayer. He can only condemn that, in which, while it retains the name of prayer, an endless tumult and hubbub of words is substituted for all deeper, and oftentimes in words unspeakable, utterances of the spirit; or which, having begun aright, has yet come to this, that the words have now survived the feeling with which the prayer was commenced.\*

And why not this "*much speaking*"? "*For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask Him.*" But might it not seem that these words reached a good deal further than to the rebuke of wordy unmeaning prayers? For if it be thus, answered some, if He thus knows before we ask, what necessity to pray at all? And, first, what need to express any petition in words, to tell

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\* *Ep.* 130. c. 10: Neque enim, ut nonnulli putant, hoc est orare in multiloquio, si diutius oretur. Aliud est sermo multus, aliud diuturnus affectus; nam de ipso Domino scriptum est quod pernoctaverit in orando, et quod prolixius oraverit: ubi quid aliud quam nobis præbebat exemplum, in tempore precator opportunus, cum Patre exauditor æternus? Absit ab oratione multa locutio; sed non desit multa precatio, si fervens perseverat intentio. Nam multum loqui est in orando rem necessariam superfluis agere verbis; multum autem precari est ad eum quem precamur diuturnâ et piâ cordis excitatione pulsare. Nam plerumque hoc negotium plus gemitibus quam sermonibus agitur, plus fletu quam affatu.

Him aught, who knows every thing already? But these words, Augustine replies, are only the accidental clothing of our prayer, in which we array them for our own sakes, and not for his;—so entirely accidental, that very often our prayer exists without them. They were given us at first as helps to memory, instructing us in the things which we ought to desire or deprecate either with words or without them.\* But then the more real question remains: What need to pray at all, either in words or in unuttered desires? Will not He who is altogether good, give unasked what his earthly children need? But the prayer, Augustine makes answer, is the preparation and the enlargement of the heart for the receiving of the divine gift; which indeed God is always prepared to give, but we are not always prepared to receive.† In the act of

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 3; *De Trin.* l. 15. c. 13.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 3: Ipsa orationis intentio cor nostrum serenat et purgat, capaciusque efficit ad accipienda divina munera, quæ spiritaliter nobis infundantur. Non enim ambitione precum nos exaudit Deus, qui semper paratus est dare suam lucem nobis; non visibilem, sed intelligibilem et spiritalem; sed nos non semper parati sumus accipere, cum inclinamur in alia, et rerum temporalium cupiditate tenebramur. Fit ergo in oratione conversio cordis ad eum qui semper dare paratus est, si nos capiamus quod dederit; et in ipsâ conversione purgatio interioris oculi, cum excluduntur ea, quæ temporaliter cupiebantur, ut acies cordis simplicis ferre possit simplicem lucem, divinitus sine ullo occasu aut immutatione fulgentem; nec solum ferre, sed etiam manere in illâ; non tantum sine molestiâ, sed etiam cum ineffabili gaudio, quo vere ac sinceriter beata vita perficitur. And on this that God should command men to pray, he says elsewhere (*Ep.* 130, c. 8): Quod quare faciat qui novit quid nobis necessarium sit, prius quam petamus

prayer there is a purging of the spiritual eye, which thus is averted from the things earthly which darken it, and becomes receptive of the divine light,—able not alone to endure the brightness of that light, but to rejoice in it with an ineffable joy. In the earnest asking is the enlargement of the heart for the abundant receiving; even as in it is also the needful preparation for the receiving with a due thankfulness; while, on the contrary, the unsought would most often remain the unacknowledged also.\*

Ver. 9.—On the Prayer itself Augustine first notes how we nowhere read that they of the Old Covenant were bidden to say “*Our Father*.” Their word was rather, Master,† as their relation was a servile one. Not, indeed, that they were altogether without hints that the filial relation was the true one, and that into which God de-

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ab eo, movere animum potest, nisi intelligamus quod Dominus et Deus noster non voluntatem nostram sibi velit innotescere, quam non potest ignorare, sed exerceri in orationibus desiderium nostrum, quo possimus capere, quod præparat dare. Illud enim valde magnum est, sed nos ad capiendum parvi et angusti sumus. And elsewhere: Tam largo fonti vas inane admovendum est.

\* *Serm.* 56. c. 3: Ideo voluit ut ores, ut desideranti det, ne vilescat quod dederit: quia et ipsum desiderium ipse insinuavit.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 4: Multa enim dicta sunt in laudem Dei quæ per omnes sanctas scripturas varie lateque diffusa poterit quisque considerare, cum legit: nusquam tamen invenitur præceptum populo Israel ut diceret, Pater noster, aut ut oraret Patrem Deum: sed Dominus eis insinuatus est, tanquam servientibus, id est, secundum carnem adhuc viventibus.

signed to bring his people. There were glimpses of this in the Old Testament; (Isai. i. 2; Lxiii. 16; Ps. Lxxxii. 6; Mal. i. 6;) yet Israel at best was but as the heir, who, “as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant.” The spirit of adoption, “whereby we cry Abba Father,” was not theirs: for this is the exclusive prerogative of the New Covenant, the gift of the Son, and the fruit of the Incarnation;\* to as many as believe on Him He gives power to become the sons of God. (John i. 12.) Most fitting, he remarks, is this address with which to begin our prayer, for by words like these our love is kindled; since what should be dearer to children than a Father?—and our devout affection, that such as we should be permitted thus, and on these relations, to hold converse with God. Nor less is herein involved and expressed our confidence that we shall not ask in vain, when, before asking, we have already received this greatest gift of all, the adoption of sons.† Hereby too are we prompted to the study of sanctity, that we prove not altogether unworthy of so high a descent. Moreover, he observes, it is not “*My Father*,” but “*Our Father*,” for this is the prayer of brethren that in Christ are knit together into one mystical

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\* Ut homines nascerentur ex Deo, primo ex ipsis natus est Deus.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 4: Quo nomine et caritas excitatur, . . . et quædam impetrandi præsumtio, quæ petituri sumus; cum prius quam aliquid peteremus tam magnum donum accepimus, ut sinamur dicere, Pater noster, Deo. Quid enim jam non det filiis petentibus, cum hoc ipsum ante dederit, ut filii essent?



body, adopted in Him into one and the same spiritual family upon earth.\*

“*Which art in heaven,*”—not, Augustine observes, as though God were locally in the higher regions of the world, having by comparison left the others; for if it were thus, they would be nearer Him who dwell on the mountains than those in the plains, and the birds of the air, as nearer yet, would be more fortunate and happier than either.† But he understands by “*heaven*” the hearts of the faithful, and the words to mean, Who dwellest in them as in a temple, as in thy chosen habitation;—and, of course, when the words are once transferred from the material to the moral world, there is no difficulty in speaking of God as dwelling, and delighting to dwell, rather in one place than another.‡ But the words “*which art in heaven*” are capable of a simpler explanation, and do not require that we betake ourselves to an allegory to justify their use. For while it is indeed true that the local heavens are no more the habitation of God than any other place,—that, since God is a Spirit, all place is out of place when we are thinking of Him,—yet this attribution

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 4, and *Serm.* 64 (*Appendix*): Oratio fraterna est; non dicit, Pater meus, tanquam pro se tantum orans, sed, Pater noster, omnes videlicet unâ oratione complectens, qui se in Christo fratres esse cognoscunt.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 5.

‡ *Ep.* 187: Fatendum est ubique esse Deum per divinitatis præsentiam, sed non ubique per habitationis gratiam. This whole letter is on the presence of God, and how far it may be attributed to one place more than another.

of the pure immeasurable spaces of the ether above us—the regions lifted high “above the smoke and stir of this dim spot”—to God for his habitation, is part of the unconscious symbolism which is common to all ages and all people, and in no respect a denial of his declaration, “I fill heaven *and earth*.” The introduction of the words into the beginning of this prayer rests on this universal symbolism; they are, as it were, a *Sursum corda*, they remind us that now we have lifted up our hearts from earth and things earthly to an higher and purer world.

But they have an higher value yet, as they are a protest against all pantheistic notions about prayer, all which rest on the assumption of the identity of our spirit and the Spirit of God. We are thus bidden to look for God, not in, but out of and above, ourselves. Prayer is not to be the sinking in of the spirit upon itself, but the struggling up of our spirit toward another Spirit, higher and holier than our own, one with which our spirit is indeed allied, but yet with which it is not one and the same; “The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit.” The Mahommedan Sufies, and other pantheistic devotees of the East, in the deepest abstractions of their devotions, are indeed worshippers of no God but self, inasmuch as they have lost or denied this distinction, for which the words here, no less than the recognition of a relation implying difference and distinction in the address “*Our Father*,” are a standing witness.

“*Hallowed be thy Name*.” What is this? Augustine asks; can God be holier than He is already? Not in

Himself; that Name in itself remains always the same, “*hallowed*” for evermore; but in us its sanctification is capable of increase, and in this petition we are asking for this increase of its sanctity in ourselves and in others, that God, in fact, may be more known and honoured and feared among men as the Holy One.\* While then there must not be that emptying of the phrase “*Name of God*,” which would make it nothing more than the awful title by which we designate Him, for then in this petition there would be little else than a desire that blasphemous speeches might cease out of the world; so, on the other hand, we must not take the “*Name of God*” as identical with God himself. For, in proof of this, we could not desire that God might be hallowed, or holier than He already is. But his Name we can; for it is that whereby He has revealed himself to men, it is all of himself, which, not being ineffable, He has uttered and declared;—the coming out of all which may be known of Him from the unfathomable abyss of being. (Exod. iii. 13, 14.)† As

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\* *Serm.* 57. c. 4: Pro nobis rogamus, non pro Deo . . . . Quod semper sanctum est, sanctificetur in nobis. *Serm.* 56. c. 4: Quid est sanctificetur? sanctum habeatur, non contemnatur. *Enarr. in Ps.* ciii. 1: Quid ergo rogamus? Ut illis hominibus, qui per infidelitatem nondum habent, nomen Dei sanctum sit, quibus nondum est ille sanctus, qui per se et in se et in sanctis suis sanctus est. Rogamus pro genere humano, rogamus pro orbe terrarum, pro omnibus gentibus, quotidie sedentibus et disputantibus, quia non est rectus Deus, et non recte judicat Deus; ut aliquando ipsi se corrigant, et rectum cor ad illius rectitudinem ducant; et adhærentes ei, directi ad rectum, non jam vituperent, sed placeat rectis rectus.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* ci. 25.

long as there is room either for ourselves or for others to love this Name, this revelation of his perfections, more, so long this prayer must find utterance from our lips, and so long cannot altogether give place to the "Holy, Holy, Holy," which is not prayer and petition, but purely and solely adoration and praise.

Ver. 10. "*Thy kingdom come*;"—yet not as though his kingdom were not already among us, but even as the present light is absent to the blind and to them who wilfully close their eyes, so that kingdom, though it be ever with us, is yet now absent from them who will not know of it.\* But all must know it then, when it shall not merely be spiritually but visibly set up: and it is for this we ask, that it may so "*come*" to us now, that we may be found in it then.†

"*Thy will be done*,"—that is, Let it be done here according to thy will; for Augustine denies, what at first sight might seem to lie in the words, that the end and consummation here prayed for is the absorption of all other wills in the will of God, so that in this sense his will shall

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 6: Quemadmodum enim etiam præsens lux absens est cæcis et eis qui oculos claudunt, ita Dei regnum quamvis numquam discedat de terris, tamen absens est ignorantibus. And *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 68 (on the words, Tunc justi fulgebunt sicut sol in regno Patris sui: Matt. xiii. 43): Regnum fulgebit in regno, cum regno venerit regnum, quod nunc oramus et dicimus, Veniat regnum tuum. Sed nondum regnat hoc regnum.

† *Serm.* 56. c. 4: Ut in nobis veniat, optamus; ut in illo inveniamur, optamus.

everywhere alone be done. Rather is it the bringing all the lesser circles of the wills of God's creatures to have the same centre as the great circle of God's all-embracing will. God's will is not that his creatures should not will, but that they should will only what is good and true: it is not that their wills should be annihilated, but brought back into harmony with the will of perfect goodness. This may seem at first a distinction hardly worth making, yet the whole Monothelite controversy was a witness to the deep importance which the Church attached to the maintaining of the reality in the perfected manhood of her Head, and so also in her members, of a human will, which should be subordinated indeed to the divine will, yet should not be abolished by it.\* And this is his practical exposition of the words, "*Thy will be done*;" grant that we may never seek to warp the straight to the crooked, thy will to ours, but always to correct the crooked by the straight, our will by thine.†—And "*in earth as it is in*

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 6: Qui ergo faciunt voluntatem Dei, in illis utique fit voluntas Dei; non quia ipsi faciunt ut velit Deus, sed quia faciunt quod ille vult; id est, faciunt secundum voluntatem ejus.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxi. 11: Duæ voluntates sunt, sed voluntas tua corrigatur ad voluntatem Dei, non voluntas Dei detorqueatur ad tuam. Prava est enim tua, regula est illa, regula, ut quod pravum est, ad regulam corrigatur. And presently before: Quomodo distortum lignum etsi ponas in pavimento æquali, non collocatur, non compaginetur, nec adjungitur, semper agitur et nutat, non quia inæquale est ubi posuisti, sed quia distortum est quod posuisti: ita et cor tuum, quamdiu pravum est et distortum, non potest collinari rectitudini Dei, et non potest in illo collocari, ut hæreat illi. *Enarr. in Ps.* cxlvi. § 7:

*heaven* ;” as by the angels there, by us also here.\* This is the simple explanation, not, as he sometimes throws out, that “*heaven*” may be the Church, and “*earth*” the world. For this is a prayer for perfection and completion ; and since that will is only imperfectly done even in the Church, such could not be the ultimate longing of the souls of the faithful, nor that in which they would find their final rest. And this is fatal to all other explanations of the like kind.†

Ver. 11. “*Give us this day our daily bread.*”—Augustine objects to the narrowing of this petition to any one thing ; either, as some did, to the Holy Eucharist, or as others, who gave it somewhat a wider meaning, to all spiritual refection ; or, again, as others, going into quite the other extreme, to the nourishment of the body exclusively.‡ This “*bread*” is rather the whole aliment of body and of spirit ; of the body, as food, with whatever else is necessary for our earthly life ; and of spirit, so that the frequent communions, the daily worship, the readings of the Scriptures, the hymns we hear and sing, these all will appertain to, and be included in, the “*daily bread*”

Distortum cor, parum est quod non se corrigit ad Deum : et Deum vult distorquere ad se.

\* *Serm.* 57. c. 6 : Quomodo te non offendunt Angeli tui, sic te non offendamus et nos.

† Such are to be found *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 10 ; *Serm.* 56. c. 5, and 57. c. 6.

‡ *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 7.



which we ask.\* He does not fail to remark the silent rebuke that there is here for the worshipper, who takes these words in his mouth, while he is allowing himself in anxious and far-looking cares, while he is making luxurious provision for the flesh and for its lusts. It is but bread which with his lips he asks, and that for the day.† This prayer is the answer of the faithful to the admonition of the apostle, (1 Tim. vi. 8,) "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content."‡

Ver. 12. "*And forgive us our debts.*"—This petition Augustine does not refer to the great forgiveness, which is assumed as a thing already past, already in baptism possessed, and out of the faith in which, and in the adoption that went with it, the entire prayer proceeds. But he refers this to the sins of a daily infirmity, in which even he who watches the most will yet be entangled; and

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\* *Serm.* 57. c. 7: Da æterna, da temporalia. Promisisti regnum, noli negare subsidium. Dabis apud te sempiternum ornamentum, da in terrâ temporale alimentum. *Serm.* 58. c. 4: Quicquid animæ nostræ et carni nostræ in hâc vitâ necessarium est, quotidiano pane concluditur.

† The difficult question of the meaning of ἐπιούσιος does not trouble him much. He is in general satisfied with quotidianus; or, if he uses Jerome's correction, supersubstantialis,—and the only passage in which I have found it, is in a sermon which his Benedictine editors have dismissed to the *Appendix* (*Serm.* 64),—he does not more than refer the word to Christ, the bread of life, qui omnem superat substantiam.

‡ *Serm.* 58. c. 4: Pereat avaritia, et dives est natura.

without which a life in the flesh can scarcely be led : \* scarcely without some of the world's dust adhering to him (*vix sine pulvere*) will even the faithful man walk through the world's paths. But in this prayer there is, so to say, the shaking off this dust before it has settled and hardened upon him. † Herein is the daily washing of *the feet*, for them that are already partakers of the great washing. ‡ (John xiii. 10.) The daily sins of a Christian man may be small, yet are not therefore to be despised. For if despised, then, though not else, they become indeed dangerous. And feeling the importance of this matter, he illustrates it with manifold comparisons. It is of little drops that mighty rivers, yea ruinous and wide-wasting

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\* *Con. Ep. Parmen.* l. 2. c. 10: Quod utique non de illis peccatis dicitur, quæ in baptismi regeneratione dimissa sunt, sed de iis quæ quotidie de seculi amarissimus fructibus humanæ vitæ infirmitas contrahit. *Ep.* 265. § 8: Est etiam pœnitentia bonorum et humilium fidelium pene quotidiana, in quâ pectora tundimus, dicentes, Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris. Neque enim ea nobis dimitti volumus, quæ dimissa non dubitamus in baptismo, sed illa utique quæ humanæ fragilitati, quamvis parva, tamen crebra subrepunt; quæ si collecta contra nos fuerint, ita nos gravabunt et opprimunt, sicut unum aliquod grande peccatum. Quid enim interest ad naufragium, utrum uno grandi fluctu navis operiatur et obruatur, an paulatim subrepens aqua in sentinam et per negligentiam derelicta atque contempta impleat navem atque submergat? Cf. *Ep.* 54; *De Civ. Dei*, l. 21. c. 27: Quid est ergo *peccata vestra*, nisi peccata, sine quibus nec vos eritis, qui justificati et sanctificati estis?

† *Serm.* 351. § 4—6.

‡ *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 56: Quotidie pedes lavat nobis, qui interpellat pro nobis; et quotidie nos opus habere ut pedes lavemus . . . in ipsâ Oratione Dominicâ confitemur, cum dicimus, Dimitte nobis. Cf. *Serm.* 351. c. 3; *Enchir. de Fide, Spe, et Car.* c. 71.

inundations are made up. The leak may be trifling, yet if waters are always coming in, and not being continually pumped out, they will in the end sink the ship. A mountain of minute grains of sand will as effectually crush out the life, as the same bulk of solid lead.\* Little venomous insects, if only there are enough of them, will kill a man with their multitudinous bites, as certainly as some wild beast with its single one.† But in this prayer there is for the man that faithfully uses it, the pledge and power of a daily cleansing, the medicine of his slight but ever recurring hurts.‡

Augustine uses the testimony of this prayer against all proud Pelagian notions of an absolutely sinless state in this life.§ He loves to entrench himself here ;|| he dwells

\* *Serm.* 58. c. 9 : Non potes hic vivere sine ipsis [sc. peccatis,] vel minuta sint, vel levia sint. Sed ipsa levia et minuta non contemnantur. De minutis guttis flumina implentur. Non contemnantur vel minora. Per angustas rimulas navis insudat aquâ; impletur sentina: et si contemnat sentina, mergitur navis. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps.* cxxix. § 5; *Serm.* 56. c. 9 : Quid interest, utrum te plumbum premat, an arena? plumbum una massa est, arena minuta grana sunt, sed copiâ te premunt.

† *Serm.* 278. c. 12, 13 : Magnæ bestiae uno morsu occidunt hominem: minutæ autem cum fuerint multæ congregatæ, plerumque interimunt; et talem perniciem inferunt, ut pœnis hujusmodi gens superba Pharaonis judicari meruerit.

‡ *De Pecc. Mer. et Rem.* l. 3. c. 13; *Ep.* 167. c. 6 : Quoniam in multis offendimus omnes, suggerit Dominicam tanquam quotidianam quotidianis, etsi levioribus, tamen vulneribus, medicinam.

§ Of such a perfect state he says, *De Pecc. Mer. et Rem.* l. 3. c. 13 : Optandum est ut fiat, conandum est ut fiat, supplicandum est ut fiat; non tamen quasi factum fuerit, confitendum.

|| *Ep.* 176. § 2 : Nova quippe hæresis et nimium perniciosa tentat

on the fact that it was to the apostles themselves that this prayer was first given: they were to acknowledge in these words their own sinfulness,\* and shall any other assume themselves more exempt from imperfection than they, and thus to have outgrown the use of this prayer? And if not, if it was intended, as it plainly was, for all, and at all periods of their Christian life, it is not to be thought for an instant that Christ would have put a lie into the mouth of any; which would yet be the case, if any who were without sin were still at his bidding to pray this prayer, asking forgiveness for sins of which they were not guilty. The Pelagians had two or three escapes from this conclusion. One was this, that a perfect man might yet pray this prayer out of humility—a lying humility, which Augustine more justly characterizes as itself an awful sacrilege, which would constitute him a sinner, had he been none before;†

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assurgere inimicorum gratiæ Christi, qui nobis etiam Dominicam Orationem impiis disputationibus conantur auferre. Cum enim Dominus docuerit ut dicamus, Dimitte nobis debita nostra, isti dicunt posse hominem in hâc vitâ, præceptis Dei cognitis, ad tantam perfectionem justitiæ sine adjutorio gratiæ Salvatoris, per solum liberum voluntatis arbitrium pervenire, ut ei non sit jam necessarium dicere, Dimitte nobis debita nostra.

\* *Ep.* 157. c. 2: Omnibus enim necessaria est Oratio Dominica, quam etiam ipsis arietibus gregis, id est, apostolis suis Dominus dedit, ut unusquisque Deo dicat, Dimitte nobis debita nostra. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 14. c. 9: Non enim qualiumcunque hominum vox est; sed maxime piorum, multumque justorum atque sanctorum . . . Nunc satis bene vivitur, si sine crimine; sine peccato autem qui se vivere existimat, non id agit, ut peccatum non habeat, sed ut veniam non accipiat.

† *Con. Ep. Parmen.* l. 2. c. 10: Quod si hoc in oratione fecte et non veraciter dicunt, putantes se non habere quod eis dimittat Deus, id ipsum est inexpiabile sacrilegium. Cf. *Serm.* 181. c. 4.

or again, they replied that this prayer was given to the apostles while they were yet carnal, and suited them then, but not afterwards;\* but this he refutes by comparison of other passages, as 1 John i. 8, where no such subterfuge is possible. Somewhat more plausibly than this, they affirmed that the sinless man would merge himself, and his own separate life, in that of the whole body of the Church, and could therefore honestly use this prayer, inasmuch as in the body to which he belonged there still was sin, though not in himself.† Augustine answers them at length, and observes how one at least of their favourite examples of such a sinless man, that is, Daniel, has left them no opportunity for such an evasion; for he expressly distinguishes the two, his own sin and the congregation's, (Dan. ix. 20,) "While I was confessing my sin, and the sin of my people." He rightly concludes that for the spiritual priesthood of the New Covenant this prayer contains the same confession of sin as under the Old did the offerings which the priests made first for themselves, before ever they made them for the sins of the people. As those offerings implicitly convinced them, (Heb. vii. 27,) so this confession explicitly convinces us.‡

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\* *Serm.* 135. c. 7.

† *De Pecc. Mer. et Rem.* l. 2. c. 10. These are their words: Sancti et perfecti jam apostoli dicebant, Dimitte nobis debita nostra, . . . ut per hoc quod dicerent *nostra*, in uno esse corpore demonstrarent et illos adhuc habentes peccata, et seipsos qui jam carebant omni ex parte peccato.

‡ *Serm.* 135: Sacrificia convincebant sacerdotes . . . Non attendo quod loqueris, sed quid offeras. Victima tua convincit te.

This remission of our debts being not so much as asked except on a condition, "*As we forgive our debtors,*" causes him often to remark how terrible this prayer may become to us. If we pray it, keeping an unforgiving temper, we shall be ourselves blocking up the way by which our prayers might ascend: not merely failing to extricate ourselves from the bands of our sins, but with our own hands binding the cords of them more closely round us.\* It will little profit to do as some do, who feeling this, when they approach this petition avoid it, and pass on to the next: like a debtor that, seeing his creditor at a distance, turns into some side alley out of the way in which before he was going. For whom is it that we seek to shun? a creditor who, so long as there is this temper in us, will meet us everywhere, and whom it is impossible to evade.† (Ps. cxxxvii. 7.)

Ver. 13. "*And lead us not into temptation.*"—Augustine traces a connexion with the last petition: Forgive us

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\* *Serm.* 58. c. 6: Qui vult dicere efficaciter, Dimitte, oportet ut dicat veraciter, Sicut et nos dimittimus. *Serm.* 315. c. 7: Ibi illa inimica [ira] stat contra te. Sepit viam orationis tuæ, murum erigit, et non est quâ transeas.

† *Serm.* 352. c. 2: Quomodo quisque in vico cum occurrerit ei, cui aliquid debet, si ad manum est diverticulum, dimittit quo ibat, et it per aliam partem, ne faciem videat creditoris. Hoc tu in isto versu te fecisse arbitratus es. Devitâsti dicere, Dimitte sicut ego dimisi, ne sic dimitteret, id est, non dimitteret, quia non dimittis. Quem devitas? quis devitas? Quo ibis, ubi tu esse possis, et ille non esse?



what we have done: grant that we do not the same any more.\* He mentions that it was read in numerous Latin MSS., though he had never found it in the Greek,—that many also of the faithful in his time were wont to pray, “*Suffer us not to be led into temptation*;† it seeming to them that the actual leading of men into temptation might not by any means be attributed to God. (Jam. i. 13.) But he often shows that no need exists for shrinking from the words, or seeking to rob them of their force, by any such additions either secretly or openly made. God does tempt, just as the devil tempts: all the difference lies in the end and aim with which they severally do it,‡—the one tempting to deceive, the other to approve; Satan to bring out men’s evil to their ruin, God to bring out, and through the conflict to strengthen, their good to their everlasting gain; or if to bring out their sin, yet this only as a mean and a transition to an higher good, that they, discovering and recovering from their sin, may walk henceforward more humbly, more cir-

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\* *Serm.* 48. c. 8: *Dimitte quæ fecimus, et da ut alia non committamus.*

† *De Don. Persev.* c. 6.

‡ *In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 43: *Intelligimus duas esse tentationes, unam quæ decipit, alteram quæ probat: secundum eam quæ decipit, Deus neminem tentat: secundum eam quæ probat, tentat vos Dominus Deus vester, ut sciat si diligitis eum; . . . non ergo Deus nescit, sed dictum est, ut sciat, quod est, ut scire vos faciat. Cf. *Serm.* 2. c. 3: *Non enim sibi homo ita notus est, ut Creatori; nec sic æger sibi notus est, ut medico . . . Si Deus cessat tentare, magister cessat docere. Cf. *Serm.* 57. c. 9.**

cumspectly; that knowing better, they may take up arms more earnestly against, the evil that is in them. He adduces oftentimes St. Peter, and his permitted fall, as an instance of what he means. *He* had said, like the Psalmist, "I shall never be moved."\* How good was it for him that the temptation came, and that through it he should find out the secret of his weakness, and thus also of his strength.†

But this question being set at rest, there arises another; and seeing that a temptation may come, and often does come, from God, it becomes the more needful to explain why we should here be bidden to deprecate temptation; how, too, this will agree with those Scriptures, in which we are bidden to count it all joy when we fall into divers temptations. (Jam. i. 2.) Augustine, in reply, draws a distinction between the being *led into* temptation, and the being tempted.‡ The first is the coming under the power

\* *De Corrept. et Grat.* c. 9: Hæc vox et apostoli Petri esse potuit: dixerat quippe et ipse in abundantia suâ, Animam meam pro te ponam; sibi festinando tribuens, quod ei fuerat a Domino postea largiendum . . . . Sed quia didicit non de seipso fidere, etiam hoc ei profecit in bonum, faciente illo qui diligentibus eum omnia co-operatur in bonum.

† *Serm.* 76. c. 4: Multos impedit a firmitate, præsumtio firmitatis. Cf. *Serm.* 286. c. 3; *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxvi. 1.

‡ *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 9: Aliud est induci in tentationem, aliud tentari . . . . Inducimur enim si tales acciderint, quas ferre non possumus. *Ep.* 130. c. 11: [Petimus] ne deserti ejus adjutorio alicui tentationi vel consentiamus decepti, vel cedamus afflicti. Cf. *Ep.* 177. § 4: where may be seen as well the use which Augustine makes of this petition also in his controversy with the Pelagians.

of a temptation greater than we can bear, and *this* we deprecate,\* saying, “*Lead us not into temptation,*” but not the other, for we acknowledge that to be the sad but needful condition of our life in the flesh. And many both in ancient and modern times have taken the same line: “*Lead us not into temptation;*” that is, they say, Lead us not so far *into* it, that a way back shall be impossible; suffer us not to be so inextricably entangled in it, that there shall be no means of escape; but with the temptation make ever the way of deliverance. Now though it is most true that this will ever be the prayer of the faithful,† yet such a distinction cannot be maintained as lying in the words. “*Lead us not into temptation*” is indeed what it seems at first sight, a prayer that we may not be tempted; yet not as declining to meet temptation when it comes, not as denying the blessing with which it may be charged; but out of a deep sense of our own infirmity, and of the uncertainty of the issue, praying that it may be averted, however willing we may be manfully to encounter it, yea to count it all joy, if it should arrive.‡

“*But deliver us from evil.*” On the question whether

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 9: Tanquam si quispiam cui necesse sit igne examinari, non oret ut igne non contingatur, sed ut non exuratur.

† See Tholuck's *Auslegung der Bergpredigt*, p. 430.

‡ *Ep.* 130. c. 14: In his ergo tribulationibus quæ possunt et prodesse et nocere, . . . quia dura, quia molesta, quia contra sensum nostræ infirmitatis sunt, universali humanâ voluntate ut a nobis hæc auferantur, oramus.

this be a distinct petition, and so the number of petitions in the Lord's Prayer be seven and not six, Augustine rather wavers. In one place\* he makes seven petitions, and finds a meaning and a mystery in the number, drawing a parallel between the seven and the seven beatitudes out of which the whole discourse unfolds itself; and he then refers "*Lead us not into temptation*" to evil threatening in the future, "*Deliver us from evil*" to evil which already is around and about us.† And seeing that throughout all Scripture seven is the covenant number, the number of sacrifice and the number of prayer, the signature of all meetings between God and man, this is undoubtedly true as regards the number of petitions here; they are seven and not six. Yet he himself sometimes departs from this truer view, and expressly unites these two last as forming parts of the same petition.‡ When, too, as has just been noticed, he makes "*Lead us not into temptation*" to refer to the future, and "*Deliver us from evil*" to the present, he has reversed the true order, and that which the very sequence of the petitions indicates. "*Lead us not into temptation*" is a prayer that we may be

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 11; *Serm.* 58. c. 10.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 9: Ultima et septima petitio est, Sed libera nos a malo. Orandum est enim ut non solum non inducamur in malum quo caremus, quod sexto loco petitur; sed ab illo etiam liberemur, quo jam inducti sumus.

‡ *Serm.* 57. c. 10: Ideo addidit *sed*: ut ostenderet hoc totum ad unam sententiam pertinere . . . . Liberando nos a malo non nos infert in tentationem, non nos inferendo in tentationem, liberat nos a malo. Presently after he speaks of them as sex *vel septem* petitiones. Cf. *Enchir. ad Laurent.* c. 116.

kept from the evil which is now alluring and threatening to ensnare us: "*Deliver us from evil*" is the cry for an entire deliverance, for the redemption of the body, for the coming of that time when, to speak his own language, all that is as yet only *in spe* shall be also *in re*; so that we have here, in these three petitions, a past, a present, and a future; and this the true order he has himself elsewhere implicitly indicated.\* That this deliverance from evil is first and chiefly a deliverance from our evil selves, that this is the great deliverance which we need, he often most truly and most profoundly brings out.†

Augustine 'knows nothing of the doxology, as neither do the other chiefest of the Latin Fathers; nor yet, commenting on the Sermon on the Mount, does he notice the "*Amen*," though elsewhere he gives well what its meaning is on the lips of the faithful, that it is their seal and consent and adstipulation to all that has been spoken.‡

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\* *Con. Julian.* l. 6. c. 14: Quâ [scil. gratiâ]. *liberor*, ut sciam ne intrem in tentationem, a concupiscentiâ meâ abstractus et illectus, . . . quâ *liberabor*, ut spero, in æternum, ubi jam nulla lex in membris meis repugnet legi mentis meæ—this last *liberabor* being evidently in his mind the answer to the prayer, "*Deliver us from evil*," as the *liberor* to the prayer, "*Lead us not into temptation*." This the right meaning he has spoken out, *De Pecc. Mer. et Rem.* l. 2. c. 4: Deinde addimus quod perficietur in fine, cum absorbebitur mortale a vitâ: Sed libera nos a malo.

† Libera me a me. And again, *Serm.* 44. c. 3: Libera me ab homine malo, a me ipso.

‡ In a fragment of a sermon, v. 5. p. 1510: Fratres mei, Amen vestrum subscriptio vestra est, consensio vestra est, adstipulatio vestra est.

Ver. 14, 15.—Augustine has oftentimes solemn observations on our Lord returning back upon this condition of our obtaining forgiveness, and upon this only, among all the matters of which the Prayer had treated; here giving one blow more to the die, so to make the impression sharper and deeper on the minds of all.\* And this He did, because of the fearful consequence of a failure here; for to retain our anger or our malice is not merely to retain one sin, but in the retaining of that one to retain also every other; it is not merely to shut one door, but in that one to shut every door, by which the grace of God might enter into our souls.†

On the plan and inner coherence of the Prayer he notes how the three first petitions contain, as we have seen that the last three do, a beginning, a middle, and an end. God's "*Name*," at his coming in the flesh, began to be "*hallowed*;" since that his "*kingdom*" has been ever coming, as it is in part "*come*;" hereafter it will be a perfected kingdom, at his second advent, from which time his "*will*" will "*be done*" here as perfectly as "*in heaven*." So too, he observes, as the eternal things are first in

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\* *Enchir. de Fide, Spe, et Car.* c. 74: Ad tam magnum tonitruum qui non expergiscitur, non dormit sed mortuus est.

† *Serm.* 57. c. 11, 12: Unde accepturus enim veniam fueras pro cæteris delictis, hoc perdis. Si quid aliis sensibus, aliis cupiditatibus peccaveras, hinc erat sanandum quia dicturus eras, Dimitte, sicut et nos dimittimus. . . . Illo perduto cuncta tenebuntur; omnino nihil dimittitur.



dignity, they are here placed first in order. We are asking in the three first petitions things which, though having for us a beginning in time, will yet stand fast through eternity; the Name will be hallowed, the kingdom will be established, and the will accomplished for ever. But the other and later petitions relate to things transient: the daily bread will not be needed by them who feed on the beatific vision of God; nor the forgiveness of trespasses by them that are perfect; nor exemption from temptation, where there is nothing any more within or without to tempt; nor deliverance from evil, where all evil will have ended.\*

Nor does he fail to show how this Prayer is the mould into which our desires are to be cast,† that it is a ground-plan given us, which we may fill out, and on which we may build at large, but yet not go beyond it, being as it is normal for all other prayers; there being no possible request that a faithful man ought to make, which cannot be reduced under one or other rubric of this Prayer; no petition of any saint which is not an unfolding of something which is shut up in the Lord's Prayer. It is only such a request as ought not to have been made, something

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 10; *Serm.* 58. c. 10: Tres ergo petitiones superiores æternæ sunt; quatuor autem sequentes ad istam vitam pertinent.

† *Serm.* 56. c. 3: Verba quæ Dominus noster Jesus Christus in Oratione docuit, forma est desideriorum; *De Perfect. Just.* c. 8: Oratione insinuans omnes regulas sancti desiderii.

that we “ask amiss,” which will not range itself under one or other of these petitions.\*

Ver. 16—18.—Here is another precept, Augustine observes, on purity of intention, which is now altogether the matter in hand, a warning that no ostentation or desire of human praise be allowed to mingle with actions which ought to be done simply before God, with an eye to an heavenly and not an earthly reward.† All the precepts in this part of the discourse warn us, how it is not merely in the pomp and splendour of worldly things that pride may display itself, but that also it may lurk under rags and in sackcloth, being then a pride the more perilous as being the more veiled. For he who outdoes others in the adorning of his body, and in the splendour of other things, deceives nobody with a fraudulent appearance of sanctity, being at once convinced as a follower and a lover of the vanities of this world.‡ But he who draws the

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\* *Ep.* 130. c. 12: Si per omnia precationum sanctarum verba discurras, quantum existimo, nihil invenies quod in istâ Dominicâ non contineatur et concludatur Oratione. . . . Qui autem dicit in oratione, verbi gratiâ, Domine, multiplica divitias meas; aut, Da mihi quantas illi vel illi dedisti; aut, Honores meos auge; aut, Fac me in hoc seculo præpotentem atque clarentem; . . . puto eum non invenire in Oratione Dominicâ quo possit hæc vota coaptare.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 12: Manifestum est his præceptis omnem nostram intentionem in interiora gaudia dirigi, ne foris quærentes mercedem huic seculo conformemur, et amittamus promissionem tanto solidioris atque firmioris, quanto interioris beatitudinis.

‡ *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 12: In hoc autem capitulo

eyes of men upon himself by an unusual squalor and self-neglect, when this he puts on of choice and not endures of necessity, must be judged by the rest of his conversation, whether through contempt of superfluous ornament, or through some sinister aim he has done it; for the Lord himself has warned us to beware of wolves in sheep's clothing, and to know men not by their appearance, but by their fruits. This we shall soon be able to do, for if we give heed, it will not fail but that presently some intimation will be given us whereby we shall be able to know whether such an one be indeed a wolf in sheep's clothing, or a sheep in its own. Yet, he adds, a faithful man should not therefore flatter the eyes of men with a superfluous adorning, because that spare and barely needful array is often usurped by deceivers to cheat the unwary; the sheep should not lay aside their own clothing, because sometimes the wolves cover themselves with the like.\*

But with this clear view into the whole purpose of the

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maxime animadvertendum est, non in solo rerum corporearum nitore atque pompâ, sed etiam in ipsis sordibus luctuosus esse posse jactantiam, et eo periculosiorem quo sub nomine servitutis Dei decipit. Qui ergo immoderato cultu corporis atque vestitûs, vel cæterarum rerum nitore præfulget, facile convincitur rebus ipsis, pomparum seculi esse sectator, neque quenquam fallit dolosâ imagine sanctitatis. Qui autem inusitato squalore ac sordibus intentos in se oculos hominum facit, . . . cæteris ejus operibus potest conjici utrum hoc contemptu superflui cultûs, an ambitione aliquâ faciat.

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 24: Non ideo debent oves odîsse vestimentum suum, quia plerumque illo se occultant lupi.

passage, it is singular that Augustine should have found a difficulty in the words "*Anoint thine head*," which he does, from the habit of such anointing in times of fasting or indeed at any time having altogether disappeared when he wrote: he therefore interprets the precept mystically of the inward gladness of the spirit before the Lord.\* Yet surely here, as in so many other places, we are to see the permanent and the universal embodied and presented to us in the forms of the transient and local; and we shall interpret these words according to their true spirit and intention, when we substitute for this anointing the head any other forms of outward seemliness and decent adorning, which are in use in our own time, and the omission of which would attract a peculiar observation. They are not to be thus omitted; there is no such proclamation to be made of what the Christian man is doing.—It hardly needs to add that this, "*When ye fast*," Augustine interprets everywhere as a command. It was reserved for others to turn "*When ye fast*" into the more convenient, "*If ye choose to fast*." He notices other ways besides this of ostentatious demonstration in which our fasting may come to nothing, as when it goes together with any indulged sin, when, abstaining from things which are sometimes allowable, we do not abstain from those which are always unlawful;† or again, when it is a mere *varying* of

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 12: Intelligendum est hoc præceptum unguendi caput . . . . ad interiorem hominem pertinere.

† *Serm.* 143 (*Appendix*): Quid enim prodest pallidum esse

our luxuries, and not an *abridging* of them :\* and he draws a picture, evidently from the life, in more places than one, of a luxurious “fool-fasting,” as our Reformers happily named it, which had already sprung up in his time; and which, keeping the name, had entirely evaded the reality of fasting, being in truth no mortifying, but only a pampering of the appetite in new forms; or again, when that which thereby is spared, is not spared for the poor but for ourselves;† in all which cases it shall not be seen, he says, by our heavenly Father with any pleasure, nor bring any blessing with it.

Ver. 19, 20.—In his work especially dedicated to the elucidation of this discourse, Augustine hastens rapidly over these verses; though in other places he has loved to enlarge upon them much: yet not there so rapidly, but that he seeks to trace their connexion with what went before and what follows, a connexion which others have despaired of finding. He finds the following: Give with no unworthy aim, with no by-ends and out-looks for thine own advantage—that were to “*lay up treasures on earth;*” but do good for the love of God, for the pure love of thy

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jejuniis, si odio et invidiâ livescas? Quid enim prodest vinum non bibere, et iracundiæ veneno inebriari?

\* *Serm.* 210. c. 8, 9: Tanquam non sit Quadragesima piæ humilitatis observatio, sed novæ voluptatis occasio. And again, *Serm.* 205. c. 2: Nemo sub abstinentiæ specie mutare affectet potius quam resecare delitias.

† *Serm.* 144 (*Appendix*): Jejunium tuum te castiget, sed lætificet alterum.

brother—that is to “*lay up treasures in heaven:*” and then he points to the following verses (22, 23) in proof that it is singleness and purity of intention upon which the Lord is still dwelling. But this is scarcely tenable; for while it is most true that all which is done out of an unworthy motive perishes, yet the specifying of the “*moth*” and “*rust*”\* and “*thieves*,” as the instruments of destruction, points to the more obvious interpretation, namely, that this laying up of treasures upon earth is not, as he would have us to understand, a laying out of the temporal mammon seemingly for God, though indeed with unworthy selfish aims; but the not laying it out for Him at all, nor even appearing so to do, but rather only and evidently laying it up for ourselves.

If there be a connexion, it might perhaps be rather traced thus: Prefer the unseen and eternal before the seen

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\* For βρῶσις Augustine has, with the old Italic, *comestura*; the Vulgate, *ærugo*. Here again the change was for the worse, seeing that βρῶσις has not the special significance, so given it, of *rust*, but refers generally to the *gnawing* tooth of time, to the consumption, by whatever means, of the things which are on earth. I have observed other passages, where the earlier Latin versions were more accurate than the Vulgate which took their place. Thus the Vulgate translates κατασκηνώσεις (Matt. viii. 20) *nidos*, which we have followed, “*nests*,” *E. V.*, but the earlier translation more correctly, *diversoria*. (AUGUSTINE, *Con. Faust.* l. 22. c. 48.) Κατασκηνώσεις are not “*nests*,” neither do birds, having once left, return to their nests, as places of shelter. So, too, Heb. vi. 7, the Vulgate renders δι’ οὗς γεωργεῖται, *a quibus colitur*; and has again drawn us along with its error: “*by whom it is dressed*,” *E. V.*; but the old Italic: *propter quos colitur*. (TERTULLIAN, *De Pudic.* c. 20.)



and transitory; as I have bidden you to do this in other things, to count the praise of God better than the praise of men,—this being hollow and transient, that real and enduring,—so also and for the same reasons count it better to have treasure in heaven than on earth. Count it a blessed thing that by giving to God you can set the seal of endurance upon that which is in its nature so transitory, that you can shift beyond mortal decay and evil chance, that which of itself is so liable to these. And this is a language which Augustine himself often uses: Lift up, he says, your fruits to an higher floor, where they will not be exposed to the same inevitable danger of corrupting and spoiling, which they are on the lower.\* For He who gave, desires that we should not lose even his lower gifts, but should keep them for ever; and therefore gives counsels such as this, offering to take into his own secure keeping that which in no other way can we retain: to send it before us, to that world whither we are certainly going, that we may find it there.† You trust *in*

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. xlviii. 9*: Modo si amicus tuus intraret in domum tuam, et inveniret te in loco humido frumenta posuisse, qui forte sciret naturam corruptionis frumentorum, quam tu nescires, daret tibi hujusmodi consilium, dicens, Frater, perdis quod cum magno labore collegisti: in loco humido posuisti; paucis diebus ista putrescunt. Et quid facio, frater? Leva in superiora. Audires amicum suggerentem, ut frumenta levares de inferioribus ad superiora, et non audis Christum monentem, ut thesaurum tuum leves de terrâ ad cælum. Cf. *Serm. 60. c. 7*.

† See his beautiful words, *Enarr. in Ps. xxxviii. 7*, where, among other things, he says: Quare ibi ponis ubi possis amittere, ubi si non

God, will you not then trust Him? you believe *in* Him, will you not then believe Him, and that He has occult channels of communication between this world and the other, so that all what is committed to these will be found in that? \* Beware, he sometimes adds, lest you be of the number of them, the men of the earth, that have slept their sleep, even the sleep of a vain worldly existence, and when they awaken to a world of realities their hands are empty; they “have found nothing,” found nothing, because they placed nothing in the hand of Christ, which in each one of his poor was stretched out to them. † And he often uses the gathering distresses and

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amittas, ibi permanere perpetuo non potes? Est alius locus quo te transferam. Præcedat te quod habes, noli timere ne perdas: dator ego eram, custos ego ero. And again, of what is offered to God he says, *Serm.* 42. 2: Non dico, Hoc non perit, sed dico, Hoc solum non perit. And in a sermon, *De Contemptu Mundi* (v. 5, p. 713): Si amas divitias, præmitte, easque sequaris; ne cum amas in terrâ, aut vivus eas amittas aut mortuus.

\* *Enarr. in Ps.* xxxviii. 7: Si haberet quispiam amicus tuus quosdam locos vel cisternas, et quæque receptacula fabricarum ad servandum aliquem liquorem vel vini vel olei quæreres, et diceret tibi; Ego tibi servo: haberetque ad illa receptacula occultos canales quosdam transitusque, ut per hos clanculo iret quod palam fundetur, et diceret tibi, Quod habes, hic funde: videres autem tu non esse illum locum ubi ponere cogitabas, et timeres fundere; ille qui sciret machinamenta quædam occulta locorum suorum non tibi diceret, Funde securus, hinc illuc pervenit; non vides quâ, sed crede mihi, qui fabricavi? Fabricavit enim per quem facta sunt omnia mansiones omnibus nobis: illuc vult præcedere quod habemus, ne hoc in terrâ perdamus.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* lxxv. 6: Dormierunt somnum suum viri divitiarum, et nihil invenerunt in manibus suis. . . . Nihil inveniunt

troubles of his time, the barbarian invasions, which having already wasted Italy, were fast advancing upon Africa, and which were bringing an evident uncertainty on all things worldly, as an additional motive for heartily obeying this command;\* for, apart from the inevitable quitting at death, it seemed likely that many would have to loose their grasp of their possessions long before. Thus, writing to the clergy and people of Hippo, who in his absence had forgone, under the pressure of their temporal calamities, some customary bounties to the poor, he reminds them, that if indeed the weak fabric of this world was falling, what greater reason and motive was there in this very thing, why they should quickly transfer whatsoever of their goods they could to that stronger built City, which alone would survive the shock.† And to some that were already stripped of their worldly posses-

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in manibus suis, quia nihil posuerunt in manu Christi. Vis aliquid invenire in manibus tuis postea? Noli contemnere modo manum pauperis, et respice manus inanes, si vis habere manus plenas.

\* *Serm.* 60. c. 6: Non surgitur, non proceditur, nisi ut unâ voce dicatur ab omnibus: Væ nobis, ruit mundus. Si ruit, quare non migras? Si tibi architectus diceret, Ruituram domum tuam; nonne prius migrares quam murmurares? Structor mundi tibi dicit, Ruiturum mundum, et non credis? Cf. *Serm.* 38. c. 5—7.

† *Ep.* 122: Sicut enim ad loca munitiora festinantius migrant, qui ruinam domûs vident contritis parietibus imminere; sic corda Christiana quanto magis sentiunt mundi hujus ruinam crebrescentibus tribulationibus propinquare, tanto magis debent bona quæ in terrâ recondere disponebant, in thesaurum cœlestem impigrâ celeritate transferre; ut si aliquis humanus casus acciderit, gaudeat qui de loco ruinoso emigravit.

sions he addresses himself thus : The enemy has invaded your house, would he have invaded heaven? He has slain the servant that has watched your goods; would he have slain the Lord who was willing to have kept them, there where no thief approacheth, neither moth corrupteth? \* You have ransomed your life from the barbarians at the cost of all that you had. And how did this necessity arise? Because you would not render a portion of that all unto Christ. You would not *give*, and therefore He *took*; and took, not as He was once willing to have received at your hands, but took, leaving no blessing behind. † That which comes from his people at the gentle pressure of his simple bidding, comes as the fine and sweet and golden coloured olive oil which runs freely from the fruit, almost before ever the press has touched them. That is as the lees, the dark and vile *amurca*, which is wrung out by the force of an harsh constraint at the last. ‡

Ver. 21. "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*"—This is the reason, he says, why Christ desires his people to lay up store in heaven, namely, that they may have a heart in heaven; this is why He bids

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\* *Serm.* 60. c. 8: Invasit • hostis domum, nunquid invaderet cœlum? Occidit servum custodem, nunquid occideret Dominum servatorem, quo fur non accedit, neque tinea corrumpit?

† *Serm. de Contemptu Mundi*, v. 5. p. 713: Christo modicum non dedisti, et barbaris totum quod habuisti, dedisti . . . Christus rogat, et non accipit. Ille torquet, et totum aufert.

‡ Mundas est torcular; abundant pressuræ ejus, oleum esto tu, non amurca.

them to lift up their goods, that they may lift up their souls as well. For it is the power which the "*treasure*" has inevitably to draw after it the heart, the fact that it is the loadstar to which the needle *must* point, which makes it of such consequence *where* this treasure is stored.\* For him that has his treasure in earth, it is vain when he hears the stirring summons of the Church, Lift up your hearts, to make answer, We lift them up unto the Lord. He does not, he cannot do so; his heart is of necessity where his treasure, that which he esteems his best good, is,—in the earth, and not in heaven; and so long as his treasure is there, his heart must remain there too.†

Ver. 22, 23.—Augustine understands "*the eye*" here as the intention with which our works are performed,—"*the body*" the sum total of these works themselves. "*If thine eye be single,*" if the intention, that is, be right and pure, directed to God and to the pleasing of God, all the works which are wrought according to that intention,

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. xc. 16*: Quare autem vult [Christus] ut locum mutes thesauro tuo, nisi ut locum mutes cordi tuo? Nemo enim cogitat nisi de thesauro suo. Quam multi hic sunt qui me modo audiunt, et non est cor eorum nisi in saccellis suis. In terrâ estis, quia in terrâ est quod amatis; mittatur in cœlum, et erit ibi cor vestrum.

† *Serm. 345*: Si autem in terrâ obruis cor tuum, erubescere, quia mentiris cum respondes, quando audis, Sursum corda. Nam dicitur, Sursum corda; et continuo respondes, Habemus ad Dominum. Deo mentiris. In terrâ obrutum cor habes, quia ubi fuerit thesaurus tuus, ibi erit et cor tuum.

which in other words are wrought in faith,\* will be right and pure also; they will be illuminated also. "*But if thine eye be evil,*" if thine intention is defiled and blinded by the appetite of things carnal and temporal, all the works that spring out of that impure motive shall be sharers in the darkness.†

There are two explanations of the words following: "*If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness*"—one, which should make the second "*darkness*" to be the darkness *which shall then ensue* in the body, or, to leave the image, in the whole domain of man's spiritual life; if the avenues of light are stopped, what a great darkness will ensue through that whole region of man's soul! According to the other meaning, which indeed includes this, but also something more, the second "*darkness*" is the darkness *before existing* (τὸ σκότος, with the article) in that region; and then we must understand our Lord as contemplating the whole region of man's passions and propensities as itself "*darkness:*" this obscure and confused chaos was to have been

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\* *Con. Julian.* l. 4. c. 3: Hunc oculum agnosce intentionem, quâ facit quisque quod facit; et per hoc disce eum qui non facit opera bona intentione fidei bonæ, hoc est, ejus quæ per dilectionem operatur, totum quasi corpus, quod illis, velut membris, operibus constat, tenebrosus esse, hoc est plenum nigredine peccatorum.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 13; *Enarr. in Ps.* cxviii. 37: Proinde magni interest cum aliquid bonum facimus, ejus rei contemplatione faciamus; . . . ut scilicet non tantum si bonum est quod facimus, sed præcipue si bonum est propter quod facimus, cogitemus.



lighted up by the rays of heavenly light received through the eye of the soul ; but if even this eye is obscured, if that which was light becomes darkness, what will it be with that *which is of its own nature darkness*: not, as our version has it, “*that darkness*,” but “*the darkness*,” which is now cut off, by the obstruction of its one avenue of light, from the only illumination which could have reached it? I cannot doubt that this deeper, is also the truer, meaning. Tholuck\* affirms that Augustine has embraced it; yet not certainly in his exposition of this discourse; where his meaning, though hard to catch, is certainly not this, nor have I been able to find any other passage to justify the assertion.†

Ver. 24.—The connexion is thus traced: there was a warning in the preceding verse against the double eye as opposed to the single, and now follows the assurance of the folly of attempting the double service, an attempt which might flow out of that double eye. He has a subtle remark, noting the nice selection of the words here, and clearing the passage even from the appearance of a repetition. In the first clause, the “*master*” whom the man will “*hate*” is Satan, the “*master*” whom he will

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\* *Auslegung der Bergpredigt*, p. 452.

† It is evidently implied in the translation of the Vulgate, *Ipsæ tenebræ quantæ erunt*: (but for this Augustine has, *Tenebræ quantæ*!) and by St. Jerome, *Ipsa caligo quantis tenebris obvolvitur*; by Chrysostom also, and most of the ancients, though the other is in modern times the more common explanation.

“*love*” is God, and this the faithful man will both do and profess to do. But no man actually and openly professes to hate God and love the devil; so that in the second clause, when the Lord is putting the converse case, he changes both words, since they would be no longer the most appropriate; the sinner “*holds to*” Satan, when he follows his rewards; he practically “*despises*” God when he heeds not his promises and his threatenings, however little he may acknowledge to himself or to others that he is doing either this or that.\* Augustine does not commit the mistake, which is a modern one, of making “*mammon*” a proper name, and an actual title of “the god of this world;” but, on the contrary, gives its right explanation, though at the same time he says with truth, that *its* service is *his* service.†

Ver. 25—34. “*Therefore,*”—while there cannot be a single eye (ver. 22) so long as we propose a double object for our striving, and while under the pretext that we are only providing things necessary, the whole inordinate care and servitude to mammon may again come in, “*Therefore,*” our Lord proceeds, “*take no thought ‡ for your life,*

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\* *Quæst. Evang.* l. 2. c. 36: Non dixit, Odiet, sed contemnet: sicut solent minas ejus postponere cupiditatibus suis, qui de bonitate ejus ad impunitatem sibi blandiuntur.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 14: Lucrum Punice mammon dicitur. Sed qui servit mammonæ, illi utique servit, qui rebus istis terrenis merito suæ perversitatis præpositus, magistratus hujus seculi a Domino dicitur.

‡ *μη μεριμνᾶτε.* Augustine’s non habere sollicitudinem, and the

*what ye shall eat or what ye shall drink, nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on ;*” and then Augustine traces the argument in the latter clause of the verse thus: Will not He who gave the more excellent thing, the breath of life, give also the meaner thing, the meat by which that life is sustained? He who fashioned your marvellous bodies, cannot and will not He furnish the raiment which they need?\*

Augustine connects ver. 27 with the first clause of the

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ne solliciti sitis of the Vulgate, are both better than our “*Take no thought,*” which was a change for the worse from the “*Be not careful*” of the earlier translations. The μέριμνά (from μέρις and μερίζω) is the care which *divides* and draws the soul more ways than one,—hinders a serving of the Lord ἀπερισπάστως (1 Cor. vii. 35.) Now it is true that the words *solicitus* and *solicitudo* do not rest on the same image of *distraction*, but they express the *unsettling* of the spirit through unreasonable anxiety. *Solicitus*, from *solo* and *cio*, that which is moved from its resting-place, and borne up and down, the contrary of the ἰδραῖος. It will thus stand in its etymology in connexion with the μὴ μετεωρίζεσθε, in the parallel passage in St. Luke (xii. 29): Be not swayed backward and forward, as a bucket in the air, without any sure resting-place (Nolite in sublime extolli: Augustine). Our “*Take no thought*” sounds like an exaggeration of the precept of faith, and by the help of assuming that it is so, and the consequent impossibility of carrying out the precept, men justify to themselves the whole extent of their unfaithful anxieties and cares.

\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 15: Dominus admonet, ut meminerimus multo amplius nobis Deum dedisse, quod nos fecit et composuit ex animâ et corpore, quam est alimentum atque tegumentum; . . . qui dedit animam multo facilius escam esse daturum. He rightly remarks that ψυχὴ here is to be translated “*life*” and not soul, as at Matt. x. 39: “He that findeth his life (ψυχὴν) shall lose it.”

verse following, and reads, "*Which of you, by taking thought,\* can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment?*" He who has determined your bodies shall be just what they are, and that is evidently God, for ye yourselves are powerless in the matter, you could add nothing to them in this respect, cannot He also clothe them?† But Maldonatus rightly remarks, that this cannot be the true connexion, as is clear from a comparison with the parallel passage in St. Luke, (xii. 25—27,) where the interposition of ver. 26 makes it impossible that such could be the line of thought. Nor yet does he himself give the right, though he acutely points out the error of this. That true one will only be attained when the word which we have translated "*stature*" (ἡλικία) is accepted rather in its other sense, "*term of life.*" (John ix. 21—23.)‡ There is much against taking it as "*stature*" here. In the first place, had our Lord wished to show that a man could not do "*that which is least*"§ for his body, we should rather expect, "*Which of you by taking thought can add an inch,*" or, He might have said yet

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\* μεριμνῶν, for which he has *curans*, which at least is better than the *cogitans* of the Vulgate.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 15: Cujus potestate atque dominatu factum est, ut ad hanc staturam corpus vestrum perduceretur, ejus providentiâ etiam vestiri potest.

‡ This was first, I believe, suggested by Erasmus. Hammond has brought well together the arguments in its favour.

§ Augustine feels that adding a cubit to the body can hardly be called "*that which is least*," and seeks to help the interpretation thus (*Quæst. Evang.* l. 2. c. 28): Minimum est enim hoc, sed Deo corpora operanti.

more strongly, "*an hair's breadth*," to his height? So large a measure as a cubit is, according to the laws of a natural rhetoric, certainly out of place. We should feel this much more vividly if we were to substitute a foot, which yet is not by one-half so much, for the cubit, which not being a measure familiar to us, we do not at once realize how large an addition this would be. Suppose it were said "Which of you with all his caring can make himself *a foot* higher?" we should feel at once that a foot was scarcely the measure which would there have most naturally found place. This difficulty was perceived long ago by Euthymius, who sought to escape it by replying, that the cubit was used as the ordinary measure of stature. This is most true, even as the foot with us, but not to the exclusion of a smaller measure, when any inner necessity shall require the mention of the latter. And then there is this second objection, that increase of stature is not a thing about which men do take anxious thought; it can scarcely be said in any case to be an object of desire. But it is otherwise with added length of days; (1 Kin. iii. 11; Prov. iii. 16;) and understanding the passage to refer to that, our Saviour's argument will then be this: To what profit is all this solicitude about that which is to sustain life, when after all it can effect so little? with all your caring and caring, you cannot make the most trifling addition, not so much as a single cubit, to the length of your life.\* God brings in the day that ter-

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\* Attempts thus to add to it are not without example in the East. Von Hammer, in his *Fundgruben des Orients*, gives a copy of a

minates your course, whensoever he will. (Luke xii. 10.) The image will then be that of life as a race or course, (*δρομος*), and the cubit, which would have been much in the stature of a man, that rarely consisting of more than four cubits in all, would be exceedingly little, and therefore most appropriate, in the length of a course. We have abundant examples in Scripture, of life set forth under this image; as Job ix. 25; 2 Tim. iv. 7; and Ps. xxxix. 5, "Thou hast made my days *as an handbreadth*."\*

But these sayings, and those that follow to the end of the chapter, might seem at first sight to cast a slight upon *all* labour, and *all* providence on man's part: and, as was to be expected, they have not escaped this abusive interpretation. The Manichæans, for instance, as we learn from Augustine,† in their eager quest for discrepancies

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regularly executed document of the kind, in which an inferior formally makes over to his patron a certain number, I think fifteen, of the years of his life.

\* A saying of Augustine's, *Plus est pauperi videre cœlum stellatum quam diviti tectum inauratum*, is exactly in the same line of thought as this, "*Consider the lilies of the field . . . yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these*," though it does not come from him with any direct reference to what the Lord has spoken here.

† *Con. Adimant.* c. 24. See another contradiction that they found between this passage and Gen. iv. 10, in this same treatise, c. 4, with Augustine's admirable answer. As regards the passage from the Proverbs (vi. 6), he gives it altogether a spiritual significance. The time of outward prosperity is our summer, in which we must lay up of the Word of God, of the lessons of his truth, and all that which shall secretly nourish and feed us when the winter of tribulation and sorrow shall arrive. See his excellent words, *Enarr. in Ps.* Lxvi. 2, and *in Ps.* xxxvii. 20.



between the Old Testament and the New, if so they might find help for their assertion, that the Old came from a different God, since it taught another doctrine, found in this passage a contradiction to Solomon's exhortation, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, &c." (Prov. vi. 6—8;) and the idle vagabond monks, who bore, after the Church had cast them out, the name of Euchites,† affirmed not merely the lawfulness of living without labour, but on the plea of this passage, avowed it as a point of perfection to abstain from all toil; declaring that so they came close to this command of Christ, feeding like the birds out of God's hand, and living on his free bounty, without any carefulness for to-morrow.†

But Augustine set himself with a strong earnestness against this perversion of Christ's words, and the spreading evil which from this had infected many,—dedicating an especial treatise to this object. It cannot be, he says, that abstaining from labour is a point of perfection, for the blessed apostle St. Paul himself, when indeed he had abundant reasons which would have justified his releasing himself from toil, yet laboured with his own hands, and gave the same commandment in the Churches, "that if

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\* *Liber de Hæres.* c. 57.

† *De Op. Monach.* c. 3: Evangelica præcepta, de quibus nonnulli non solum pigritiam sed etiam arrogantiam suam foveant. And c. 30: Quis ferat homines contumaces saluberrimis apostoli monitis resistentes, non sicut infirmiores tolerari, sed sicut etiam sanctiores prædicari, ut monasteria doctrinâ saniore fundata, geminâ illecebrâ corrumpantur, et dissolutâ licentiâ vacationis, et falso nomine sanctitatis?

any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thess. iii. 8—11; cf. Acts xviii. 1; xx. 33.) And then, as regards forethought and preparation for the coming day, neither can this, he shows, be altogether forbidden; for the Lord himself, with his disciples, had a bag, from which things needful were purchased; (John xii. 6;) the fragments that remained over of the loaves He bade to be gathered up, evidently to be reserved for another occasion. How far looking too was St. Paul in the matter of the collection for the poor saints at Jerusalem; (1 Cor. xvi. 1; Acts xi. 27;) how much pleased at its largeness; (2 Cor. ix. 15;)\* how provident in all his arrangements concerning the different members of the Church. (1 Tim. v. 16.) Were the not making of any provision for the morrow the point of perfection, then the savage who wastes what he cannot immediately consume, who lives only for the present hour, would have reached the highest condition of all.†

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\* *De Op. Monach.* c. 16: Quantâ pinguedine sanctæ lætitiæ perfusus apostolus, dum loquitur de alterno supplemento indigentiae militum et provincialium Christi. Cf. *De Mendac.* c. 15.

† *Con. Adimant.* c. 24: Si hoc [Matt. vi. 24] ideo dictum est ut non servetur panis in crastinum, magis hoc implent vagi Romanorum, quos Passivos appellant, qui annonâ quotidianâ satiato ventre, aut donant statim quod restat aut projiciunt; quam vel Domini discipuli, qui etiam cum ipso Domino cœli et terræ in terrâ ambulantes oculos habebant: vel Paulus apostolus, qui omnium terrenorum contemptor sic tamen gubernavit ea quæ præsentî vitæ erant necessaria, ut etiam de viduis præceperit. (1 Tim. v. 16.)—*Passivus*, in this passage, is a word of African origin, and was applied to persons who led an idle, tramping, gypsy-like kind of life. (See DU CANGE, s. 5.)

He turns upon these idle monks, who seem to have made no very profitable use of the leisure which this interpretation gave them—wandering about the country, as he describes them, selling now the relics of martyrs, if indeed of martyrs—now phylacteries and amulets—professing now to be on journeys to visit their kindred, whom they had heard to be alive in some distant land, and everywhere seeking the profits of a gainful poverty, the rewards of a pretended sanctity;\* and he says to them, If you are determined to take this Scripture in the letter, you must at least be consistent, and carry your interpretation through. It is true you do not sow, nor reap; you understand Christ literally, where toil is to be avoided; then by the same reason you ought also to have no barns; but you have such, in which you are ready enough to store the labours of others. If you will be as the birds, what mean the preparations of your food, your grinding and your baking? what your reserving of aught for to-morrow?† And then he draws a lively picture of a flock of ravenous monks, such as they would be, if indeed they adhered to the letter of this precept, lighting on a field, and gathering what they need for the moment of its produce, which they must consume raw as they find it.

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\* *Sumptus lucrosæ egestatis, aut simulatæ pretium sanctitatis.*

† *De Op. Monach.* c. 23: *Cur ergo isti manus otiosas et plena repositoria volunt habere? Cur ea quæ sumunt ex laboribus aliorum, recondunt et servant unde quotidie proferatur? Cur denique molunt et coquunt? Hoc enim aves non faciunt.* \*And c. 24: *Cur volatilia cœli non vobis sunt exemplo ad nihil reservandum, et vultis ut sint exemplo ad nihil operandum?*

But who is it, he asks, that really lives according to the spirit of the precepts which his Saviour has given to him here? He who is confident that, if by infirmity or other cause he is cut off from his work, he shall indeed be fed without his toil, as the birds are, and clothed as the lilies: but with health and strength and opportunity, knows that these are God's appointed means whereby he shall receive things needful for the body; yet esteems not, because he labours, that it is any other than God who does truly feed him and clothe him now:\* who knows that it is the solicitude, and not the labour, (for that is God's appointment,) which is excluded;† the doubt whether God could, if need were, provide for us in any other way, that is forbidden; with the feeling that it is any other except only He who does ever under any circumstances, whether we labour or whether we are hindered from labour, in fact provide.

Augustine does not take our Saviour's words, "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you,*" as actually excluding prayer for these lower things; only they shall not be the objects of our first, our chiefest, or our most earnest

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\* *De Op. Monach.* c. 27: Si et nos per aliquam vel infirmitatem vel occupationem non possumus operari, sic ille nos pascet et vestiet, quemadmodum aves et lilia, quæ nihil operantur hujusmodi: cum autem possumus, non debemus tentare Deum nostrum, quia et hoc quod possumus, ejus munere possumus, et cum hinc vivimus, illo largiente vivimus, qui largitus est ut possumus.

† *De Mendac.* c. 15: Satis elucet ista præcepta sic intelligenda ut nihil operis nostri temporalium adipiscendorum amore, vel timore egestatis, tanquam ex necessitate faciamus.

prayers. The great things of the kingdom are to claim these ; but in subordination to those greater, we may ask for health of body, peace in our times, and the other conditions of an outward prosperity.\*

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\* *Serm. 63 (Appendix)*: Nec hoc sic dicimus, ut pro rebus temporalibus Deum non oremus, id est, pro sanitate corporis, aut pro pace temporum, aut pro abundantia fructuum. Debemus et ista a Deo petere, sed secundo et tertio loco, ut primas partes in omni intentione nostræ orationis amor animæ et desiderium vitæ æternæ obtineat.

## ST. MATTHEW, CHAP. VII.

VER. 1.—“*Judge not, that ye be not judged.*” These words, Augustine observes, must not be understood as though the Christian man were altogether to abdicate the right of discerning between good and evil; for the Lord himself bids us to know men by their fruits, that is, to judge by the outward evidence which they give us of what spirit they are; and says again, “Judge righteous judgment;” (John vii. 24;) and his apostle, “Do not ye judge them that are within?” (1 Cor. v. 12.) For there are some sins which are manifest, actions which cannot be done with a right intention; which are “open beforehand, going before to judgment.” (1 Tim. v. 24.) On all these a Christian *must* pass a judgment; though even here he will refrain from judging what will be the final state of him who does these things, since it will be always possible that he may repent and be saved. But the “*Judge not*” chiefly refers to those acts which are capable of a double interpretation;\* these are ever to have the judgment of charity. He gives for examples the following: If

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* 1. 2. c. 18: Sunt quædam facta media quæ ignoramus quo animo fiant, quia et bono et malo fieri possunt, de quibus temerarium est judicare, maxime ut condemnemus.



a man, on the plea of bodily weakness, should decline to keep the fasts of the Church, and you should not believe his plea, but should count that it were only an excuse for self-indulgence, an unwillingness to mortify the flesh, this were to transgress the commandment, and to be a judge of evil thoughts. Or a man rules his house, as it seems to you, with too severe a strictness; yet do not therefore conclude him harsh and cruel, since it may be out of a zeal for righteousness, and the love of an holy discipline, that he does it.\* In these, and all such like cases, that word will apply, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth;" (Rom. xiv. 4;) and that other word, "Judge nothing before the time;" (1 Cor. iv. 5;) and our Lord's precept here, "*Judge not, that ye be not judged.*" Nor is it things questionable alone, and acts capable of a double interpretation, on which men are tempted to exercise uncharitable judgments. But the evil of their own hearts, the sad consciousness of their own mingled, and oftentimes impure motives, makes them prompt to suspect the same in others, and to think that even deeds evidently good do yet grow out of some evil root.† Against all

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\* *Serm. 66, (Appendix):* De illis vero quæ aperta sunt et publica mala judicare et arguere, cum caritate tamen et amore, et possumus et debemus, odio habentes non hominem sed peccatum, non vitiosum sed vitium; detestantes morbum potius quam ægrotum.

† Thus *Enarr. in Ps. cxviii. 39*, with a mournful, yet most true heart-knowledge, he says: Hoc enim proclivius homo suspicatur in alio, quod sentit in seipso.

this he reminds us, the seeking of that charity which "thinketh no evil," is the only remedy that will avail.

Ver. 2.—But how, he asks, is what follows to be understood: "*For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged;*" since it cannot mean that if we judge rashly of others, God will judge rashly of us; or if we measure unjustly to them, it will in turn be measured unjustly to us? But it is not the *temerity* of the sinner's judgment which God will imitate, but the *severity* of it: "With the froward thou wilt show thyself froward." (Ps. xviii. 26.) Nor in the moral world can the retaliation, whether it comes directly from God, or from those that are his vicegerents on earth, be considered as a new act of injustice, but is rather the restoration of the disturbed balances of righteousness,† by the throwing of a counter-weight into the scale opposite to that into which the offender had thrown his weight. Punishment is the recoil of crime, and the force of the back-stroke proportions itself to the force of the original blow.

He has a remarkable reply to some who found in these words an argument against the everlasting duration of the punishment of the ungodly. These argued, that as men sinned within limits of time, so within limits of time their

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 18.

† So, speaking of Dives and Lazarus, with reference to this verse, he says, *Serm.* 367: *Pensantur . . . pro purpurâ flamma, refectio pro nuditate, ut salva sit æquitas statera.* Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 21. c. 11.

punishment must be restrained, according to this phrase, “*With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again,*” and according to the general equity, which would demand that the sin which was temporal should receive punishment which was temporal as well. But their sin, though accidentally confined within limits of time and space, had its true seat and root in that which was everlasting in them, in their will, in that latent eternity which is in every man.\* A sin, though coming outwardly to pass under conditions of time and of space, yet in its essence lies out of these altogether,—is eternal as the woe it brings.

Ver. 3—5.—In his excellent commentary on David’s

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\* *Ep.* 102. qu. 4: In eâdem igitur mensurâ, quamvis non æternorum malefactorum, æterna supplicia remetiuntur, ut quia æternam voluit haberi peccati perfruitionem, æternam vindictæ inveniat severitatem. See, too, his argument from the analogy of human punishments. (*De Civ. Dei*, l. 21. c. 11.) The chapter is very remarkable, as anticipating so much of Butler’s argument, in the chapter of *The Analogy*, “On the Government of God by Rewards and Punishments.” Among other things he says: Jam vero damnum, ignominia, exsilium, servitus, cum plerumque sic infligantur ut nullâ veniâ relaxentur, nonne pro hujus vitæ modo similia pœnis videntur æternis? Ideo quippe æterna esse non possunt, quia nec ipsa vita quæ his plectitur porrigitur in æternum: et tamen peccata quæ vindicantur longissimi temporis pœnis, brevissimo tempore perpetrantur, nec quispiam exstitit qui censeret tam cito nocentium finienda esse tormenta, quam cito factum est vel homicidium, vel adulterium, vel sacrilegium, vel quidlibet aliud scelus, non temporis longitudine, sed iniquitatis et impietatis magnitudine metiendum.

great penitential Psalm (the 51st, with him the 50th) Augustine illustrates this forwardness to pull out the mote from a brother's eye combined with ignorance concerning the beam in our own, by the example of David; who in the time of his own worst sin blazed up in a righteous indignation, as he in his blindness deemed it, against one whose offence was infinitesimally small as compared with his own; and he justly traces up the severity of the sentence which David pronounces against the spoiler, not to the sense of righteousness which he still possessed, but to his present blindness in regard of his own transgression.\*

As examples of what the Lord means by "*the mote*" and "*the beam*," Augustine often instances anger and hate; transient anger is a mote disturbing indeed, but not destroying, the spiritual vision; while hatred, which is anger grown inveterate,† the mote now swollen into a beam,‡ quite destroys that vision, causing a man to walk altogether in darkness.§ (1 John ii. 11.) He who in his heart nourishes hatred to his brother, with what front shall he condemn and rebuke his brother for the passing anger which may find place in his? At times it would appear

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. l. 5.*

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. l. 2. c. 19*: Odium est ira inveterata.

‡ *Serm. 82. c. 1*: Festuca initium trabis est. Nam trabes quando nascitur, prius festuca est. Rigando festucam, perducis ad trabem: alendo iram malis suspicionibus, perducis ad odium.

§ *Serm. 56, (Appendix)*: Cordis oculum festuca turbat, trabes excæcat. . . . Per subitanam iracundiam cordis oculus turbatur, per odium lumen caritatis extinguatur.

as if Augustine meant to limit the interpretation to this single case, but of course this would be too narrow a meaning; and elsewhere he gives the more comprehensive interpretation, which makes "*the mote*" and "*the beam*" to be respectively any smaller and greater sins: "*the mote*" being that sin which is indeed injurious to, but is still consistent with, a state of grace, an impaired but not a destroyed vision of God; but "*the beam*" involving absolute blindness, a total suspension of spiritual vision.

He is very earnest in warning us lest we should understand this precept and prohibition—which in our cowardice and sloth we might perhaps be tempted to do—as though all fraternal correction and rebuke were declared to be out of place. The warning is only directed against the rebuking in a wrong spirit, without earnest endeavours at self-amendment, without a recognition of our common sinfulness,\* without the remembrance that we also have been "foolish, disobedient;" and thus rebuking, not in the spirit of meekness and of love, but in that of arrogance or scorn, or with an evil pleasure in the humiliation of a brother.† So far from all Christian rebuke being here

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\* On this "*Judge not*," he asks, *Serm.* 387: *Ergo tacebimus et neminem omnino corripiemus? Corripiamus plane, sed prius nos. Proximum vis corripere: nihil est tibi te ipso propinquius.*

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 19: See also much that is most admirable on this matter of Christian rebuke, *Exp. Ep. ad Gal.* 6. 1, where among other things he says: *Nunquam alieni peccati objurgandi suscipiendum est negotium, nisi cum internis interrogationibus examinantes nostram conscientiam liquido nobis coram Deo responderimus, dilectione nos facere.*

condemned, there is implicitly in the passage a command to exercise this difficult grace,\* only at the right time and in the right temper; “*then*,” after we have in ourselves sought the removal of all that is hindering our own vision of God, and rendering us incapable of giving true counsel to our brother, “*shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother’s eye;*”† and it is not to love, but to hate our brother,‡ under the plea of charity to refrain from the exercise of it, when it is needed. He observes often with what sharp correction love will frequently be armed, while indifference or hatred will either keep silence, or else flatter and by their flattery strengthen and confirm in evil.§

Ver. 6.—Augustine distinguishes between the “*holy*” and the “*pearls*.” he allows them indeed ultimately to mean the same, yet the same contemplated upon different sides. “*That which is holy*” is the truth as it may not be spoiled or corrupted, or, if in itself inviolable, as it may

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\* *Exp. Ep. ad Gal.* 6. 1: Nihil autem sic probat spiritalem virum, quam peccati alieni tractatio, cum liberationem ejus potius quam insultationem, potiusque auxilia quam convicia meditatur.

† *Serm.* 82. c. 2: Lumen quod in te est, non te permittit negligere lumen fratris.

‡ *Serm.* 82. c. 2: Tua patientia, illius mors est.

§ *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract.* 7: Si qui forte vultis servare caritatem, fratres, ante omnia ne putetis abjectam et desidiosam . . . . Non putes tunc te amare servum tuum, quando eum non cædis; aut tunc te amare filium tuum, quando ei non das disciplinam; aut tunc te amare vicinum tuum, quando eum non corripis. Non est ista caritas, sed languor.



not be laid open to profane attempts of the kind. The “*pearls*” are the same mysteries of the faith, as they are too precious to be exposed to slights or to a careless contempt.\* So also he distinguishes between the “*dogs*” and the “*swine*:” the “*dogs*” are the active opposers of God’s truth; (the *rabiosa canis*, see Acts xiii. 45;) the “*swine*” the more passive despisers;† (the *amica luto sus*;) somewhat, I suppose, as we have in the parable of the marriage of the king’s son, those that killed the king’s messengers, and those that were content with despising the message. (Matt. xxii. 5, 6.) And then he distributes the two outbreaks of hostility, ascribing the contemptuous trampling under foot to the swine, the turning again and rending to the dogs.‡ Yet I can hardly doubt but that this is an erroneous distribution, and that they both belong to the swine, so that there might well be a semicolon after “*Give*

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 20: Sanctum ex eo quod non debet corrumpi, margarita ex eo quod non debet contemni.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 20: Canes ergo pro oppugnantibus veritatis, porcos pro contemptoribus positos non incongrue accipimus. And he assumes the same, *Enarr. in Ps.* ix. 15, where of these two kinds of opposers he says: Qui malunt pertinaciter latrare, quam studiose quærere, aut qui nec latrare nec quærere, sed in suarum voluptatum cœno volutari.

‡ *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 20: Porci quamvis non ita ut canes morsu appetant, passim tamen calcando coinquant. It may be seen in Hammond what can be said in defence of this distribution; it is in itself most harsh, connecting the first and fourth clauses, the second and the third, instead of the first and third, the second and fourth. Certainly the connecting particle would not be *καὶ* but *ἢ*, were this the meaning.

*not that which is holy unto the dogs;”\** for the treading under foot is as little proper to these animals as the other outbreak of enmity, the turning again and rending: while this and that are alike the most graphic and exactest delineations of the bearing of the enraged swine; which we must naturally here consider, not as the domesticated creature, but as the hog in the ferocity of its savage state.† The warning in fact is this, You will at once expose the truth to insult and yourselves to injury.‡ So that if we are to find here two different characters of bestial opposers, we should rather say that the “*dogs*” were the unclean, the utterly and shamelessly sunken in impure lusts; (Rev. xxii. 15;) the “*swine*” the fierce and bitter opponents of the truth of God. (Ps. LXXX. 13: “The wild boar out of the wood doth root it out.”) The first would be the Heliogabalus, the second the Galerius.§

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\* In Bishop Lloyd’s New Testament there is a punctuation equivalent to this, but it is not common.

† The *στραφέντες* will express the quick sharp *turn* of the boar, with which the wound is inflicted (Horace—Verres *obliquum* meditans ictum; Ovid—*Obliquo* dente timendus aper); and the *ρήξωσι*, the nature of the wound, which is formidable not so much from its depth as from being a long tearing or ripping up, or, as we have it, “*rending*.” For the swine’s treading under foot see Plautus, *Trucul.* 2. 2 13.

‡ *Serm.* 77. c. 6: Ne forte, &c. . . ., id est, post contemptum margaritarum vestrarum etiam molesti siut vobis.

§ This view derives an additional confirmation from an accurate fixing of the meaning of *τὸ ἅγιον*. We translate it vaguely “*that which is holy*,” but it is certainly “the holy thing,” i. e. the altar flesh. See Lev. xxii. 6—16, LXX., where that is several times called

Ver. 7.—This, according to Augustine, is the connexion between this verse and the preceding. Some one, hearing these last words, might be tempted to say in his heart, “But what pearls have I, which I am even in danger of losing, by casting them before the unworthy? I hardly seem to have such for myself.” In answer to this thought, rising out of a sense of spiritual poverty, opportunely follows a suggestion of the effectual way whereby this poverty may be removed: “*Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.*” (cf. Jam. i. 5.) In his *Retractations* he recalls the distinction which in his exposition of this discourse he had sought to draw between these three; which, being withdrawn, it will be needless to examine; and he recognizes, in all three, exhortations to an instance of earnest

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τὰ ἄγρια, which no unclean person might eat; cf. Jer. xi. 15; Hagg. ii. 12. It is not that the dogs would not eat it, for it would be welcome to them; but that it would be a profanation to give it to them, thus to make it a σκύβαλον. (Exod. xxii. 31.) Such “*dogs*” are they who would turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. This, the true interpretation of τὸ ἅγιον, was preserved in the ancient Church, in the cry of the deacons to those who were about to communicate, τὰ ἄγρια τοῖς ἁγίοις, which did not mean generally, holy things for holy persons, but the holy flesh for the holy persons, for the kingdom of priests; with allusion to those Levitical ordinances, now transmuted and glorified, which I have referred to above. So, too, I have no doubt that there is a singular propriety in the image of the pearls; that they are selected, as Maldonatus suggests, for the likeness to acorns which they bear; and the fury of the swine is supposed to be excited by discovering that they are not these, but something which, though infinitely more precious, they have no desire for.

prayer.\* He finds in ver. 11 a proof that this is so; where "*ask*" evidently stands for and represents not merely itself, but the "*seek*" and "*knock*" as well. In his popular homiletic use of these words he very frequently brings into comparison the two parables of the Unjust Judge, (Luke xviii. 1,) and the Friend at midnight. (Luke xi. 5.)† The image of the knocking, with the final opening of the door, gives to the latter parallel a peculiar fitness.

Ver. 8.—The objection might here be urged, namely, that notwithstanding this and like promises in Scriptures, (as John xiv. 13; xv. 16; xvi. 23; 1 John iii. 22,) the saints do *not* always obtain their petitions, do *not* invariably "*ask*" and "*receive*." For example, St. Paul asked, and earnestly and often, for the removal of the thorn in his flesh, whatever that may have been, and it was not only not removed, but his petition expressly denied him. (2 Cor. xii. 7—9.) Augustine takes up this very example in proof that God's servants *are* always heard; in this very instance Paul was heard, not indeed to his present desire, but to his lasting good, seeing that by that temptation and through those buffetings of Satan he was

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\* L. l. c. 19: Operose quidem tria ista quid inter se differant exponendum putavi, sed longe melius ad instantissimam petitionem omnia referuntur. So *Enarr. in Ps.* cxviii. 48.

† *Serm.* 61. c. 4: Ecce paterfamilias et magnus dives, divitiarum scilicet spiritualium et æternarum, hortatur et dicit tibi, Pete, quære, pulsa. Hortatur ut petas, negabit quod petis? Attende a contrario similitudinem. And he quotes Luke xviii. 1. Cf. *Ep.* 130. c. 8.

to be perfected.\* God dealt with him as the faithful physician deals with his patient, from whom he withdraws not the knife and the cautery, notwithstanding his instant cries; he knows how far the wound reaches, and therefore he will search it to the bottom, and so make a perfect cure: he knows too that the patient will thank him for this in the end, and thus he hears him for his lasting desire, which is health; not for his momentary wish, which is release from present pain. It is thus that God hears his servants for the lasting desire of their souls, which is holiness; not for the immediate, which may be ease.† Augustine brings out, moreover, the other side of this

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\* *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract. 6*: Deus etsi voluntati nostræ non dat, saluti dat.

† *Serm. 286. c. 6*: Ne contristemini quando petitis et non accipitis, et arbitremini quod ante oculos vos non habeat Deus, si ad tempus non exaudiat voluntatem vestram. Non enim semper ægrum exaudit medicus ad voluntatem, quamvis ejus sine dubio procuret atque appetat sanitatem. Non dat, quod petit; sed quod non petit, hoc procurat. Petit frigidam, non dat. Crudelis factus est, qui venit sanare? Artis est, non crudelitatis. Non dat ad horam quod delectat: ut sanus possit omnia, nondum sano negantur aliqua. *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract. 6*: [Deus] secare vult, urere vult. Tu si clamas et non exaudiris, in sectione, in ustione, et tribulatione, novit ille quousque putre est. Tu jam vis revocet manus, et ille vulneris sinum attendit; scit quousque perveniat: non te exaudit ad voluntatem, sed exaudit ad sanitatem. Cf. *Serm. 354. c. 7*: Petit æger ut quod ad salutem apponit medicus, cum voluerit ægrotus, auferatur. Medicus dicit, Non: mordet, sed sanat. Tu dicis, Tolle quod mordet. Medicus dicit, Non tollo, quia sanat. Tu ad medicum quare venisti? Sanari, an molestiam non pati? Non ergo exaudivit Dominus Paulum ad voluntatem, quia exaudivit ad sanitatem. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. cxxx. 1*; *Enarr. 2<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xc. § 6*.

truth—that a petition may be granted in anger, as was that of the devils, when they were allowed to enter into the swine, as they sought, but did only so accelerate the doom which they feared; (Matt. viii. 31, 32;) as that of the prince of all evil, (Job i. 12,) who, desiring to tempt Job, was permitted to do so, for Job's greater approval and for the aggravation of his own confusion; as that of the Israelites, who petulantly asked for quails, and then perished, while the meat was yet in their mouths. (Ps. Lxxviii. 29—31.)\* And so, on the other hand, a petition may be refused in love; in which case it is not really refused, but rather granted in an higher shape than the asker contemplated. There is a beautiful passage in his *Confessions*, where, concerning some prayers of his mother Monica's, he says, God gave heed to the *hinge* of her desire, though He did not yield her the boon exactly by the means through which she sought it. Her desire and her earnest prayer was that her son might not sail for Italy, so did she dread for him the dangers and temptations which he would encounter at Rome: he sailed notwithstanding, and it was there at length that he found Christ.†

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\* *Enarr.* 2<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xxvi. 4: Vere felix est non qui id habeat quod amat, sed qui id amet quod amandum est. Multi enim miseri magis habendo quod amant, quam carendo. Amando enim res noxias miseri, habendo sunt miseriores. Et propitius Deus, quum male amamus, negat quod amamus; iratus autem dat amanti quod male amat.

† *Conf.* l. 5. c. 15: Quid a te petebat, Deus meus, tantis lacrimis, nisi ut navigare me non sineres? Sed tu alte consulens, et exaudiens



Ver. 9, 10. — The very ingenious allegories which Augustine discovers in the “*bread*” and the “*stone*,” the “*fish*” and the “*serpent*,” and not less in the egg and the scorpion, which St. Luke, (xi. 12,) but not our evangelist, has recorded, may be seen by any who will follow up the references given below.\* For myself, I cannot believe that “*bread*” and “*fish*” are selected for any other reason than as the most familiar objects of an wholesome nourishment which a father would give to his children: the allusions indeed are drawn from the daily life of Galilæan fishermen, (Mark viii. 6, 7; John xxi. 9,) such as many of Christ’s hearers were; and in each case the antithesis rests on a felt resemblance between what is asked, and what *might* be given in its stead: “*a stone*” has some likeness to “*bread*,” “*a serpent*” to “*a fish*,” and a scorpion, when coiled up, to an egg. Such allegories as Augustine here proposes should pass for what they are worth, as the harmless, oftentimes edifying and graceful, plays and scintillations of a religious fancy;† frequently meant for

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*cardinem desiderii ejus, non curasti quod tunc petebat, ut in me faceres quod semper petebat. We may compare Serm. 80: Qualis est apud te filius tuus nesciens res humanas, talis es et tu apud Dominum, nesciens res divinas. Ecce ante te filius tuus totâ die plorans, ut des illi cultrum, id est gladium: negas te dare, non das, contemnis fientem, ne plangas morientem. Ploret, affligat se, collidat se, ut leves eum in equum: non facis, quia non potest eum regere; elidet et occidet illum. Cui negas partem, totum illi servas. Sed ut crescat, et totum possideat secure, non das illi modicum periculosum.*

\* *Ep.* 130. c. 8; *Quæst. Evang.* l. 2. c. 22.

† This was Augustine’s own feeling about them, however some-

no more by those who offered them; but which assume a very different aspect, when they are by others fixed and hardened into permanent expositions of Scripture truth: then they often degenerate into an unworthy trifling with the word of God.

Ver. 11.—Those who are addressed here as “*being evil*” are the very same, Augustine observes, into whose mouths but now the Lord has put that word, “*Our Father;*”\* to whom He has made the promise, “*Ask, and it shall be given you:*” so that every faithful man has a double aspect—he is “*evil*” through his old nature; he is good through participation with Him who is the highest good, who is in some sense the alone good, (Matt. xix. 17,) the good in Himself, and altogether good, while others are good through Him, and only as they are sharers in his life.† He has thus seized the full force of this “*being*

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times he may lay on them a greater weight than they can well bear, and play with them overmuch. Thus *In Rom. Inchoat. Exp.* § 13, having fallen on one of these correspondencies between things natural and things spiritual, and followed it up a little, he checks himself with this observation: *Sed hæc verborum consonantia, sive provenerit sive provisa sit, non pugnaciter agendum est ut ei quisque consentiat, sed quantum interpretantis elegantiam hilaritas audientis admittit.*

\* *Ep.* 153. c. 5: Num igitur Deus Pater malorum est? Absit. Quomodo dicitur, Pater vester cœlestis, quibus dicitur, Cum sitis mali: nisi quia utrumque Veritas monstrat, quid simus Dei bono, quid humano vitio, hoc commendans, illud emendans? Cf. *Serm.* 90: Pater ergo malorum, sed non relinquendorum, quia medicus sanandorum.

† *Con. duas Ep. Pelag.* l. 3. c. 3: Inde mali, unde adhuc filii sæculi, jam tamen filii Dei facti pignore Spiritûs Sancti.

*evil*," which they fail to catch\* who take the epithet "*evil*," not as the designation of all men, of human nature in general, (Gen. viii. 21,) as it is opposed to the goodness and holiness of God, but of some particular men sunken deeper in corruption than the rest; as if Christ would say, Even the worst among you (even the "*evil*,")<sup>†</sup> do not extend their malignity to their children, but in their relations to them show themselves bountiful and good. But the other is the truer and deeper explanation, which embraces the whole race of men under this charge of "*being evil*;" (so that this perhaps is the strongest, or one of the strongest, testimonies for original sin which all Scripture contains;) and yet, being such, you have still natural affections, the yearnings of a parent's heart toward your children, and, according to your ability and knowledge, impart unto them "*good gifts*," gifts, which if not in the highest sense "*good*," are yet good for the necessities of this present life. How much more certainly will an Heavenly Father impart to his children the true goods of his kingdom; for it is those that the Lord has prominently in his eye, as is evident from a comparison with the parallel passage in St. Luke, (xi. 13,) where in-

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\* Even he himself at times, as *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 21: *Malos appellat dilectores adhuc seculi hujus et peccatores.*

† This will come more clearly out, if we note how *τις ἐξ ὑμῶν ἄνθρωπος*, (ver. 9,) is not pleonastic, as we make it, "*What man of you*;" but there is a silent opposition between the *ἄνθρωπος* here and the *Πατήρ ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς* of ver. 11; "*Who of you, though he be but a man, &c.*;" and then the being but a man will plainly appear as equal to *πονηρὸς ὢν*.

stead of "*good things*," it is his "Holy Spirit" which is promised to them that ask it.\* As He will not deny his children, altogether withholding what they ask, (ver. 7, 8,) so neither will He deceive his children, giving to them a useless or a noxious thing instead of a good. (ver. 9, 10.) He observes how here again it is the same argument as finds place in the parable of the Unjust Judge, an argument from the worse to the better.

Ver. 12.—Some will perhaps remember in Gibbon's *Memoirs* his sneer concerning this precept, that, extolled as it was, he had read the same in a work written four hundred years before Christ announced it in the Gospel, in proof of which he adduces a passage from Isocrates,—which by the way is no anticipation of it at all, for it is merely the negative injunction of not doing to others what we are unwilling to suffer from them, a rule marvellously distant from Christ's law of an active love. But Augustine, so far from being afraid of the charge that the precepts of the Gospel are old, or that others said them before Christ, makes it the glory of the written and spoken law, that it is the transcript of that which was from the first, and not merely as old as this man or that, but as the

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxviii. 48*: Alius porro Evangelista non ait, Dabit *bona* petentibus se, quæ multipliciter possunt intelligi, vel corporalia vel spiritalia; sed circumcidit inde alia, satisque diligenter expressit quid nos vehementer atque instanter voluerit poscere Dominus, et ait, Quanto magis Pater vester dabit Spiritum bonum petentibus se?

creation itself, a reproduction of the dimmed and obscured law written at the beginning by the finger of God on the hearts of all men. When therefore heathen sages or poets proclaimed any part of this, they had not thereby anticipated Christ,\* they had only deciphered some fragment of that law, which He gave from the first; and which when men, fugitives from themselves and from the knowledge of their own hearts, had lost the power of reading, He came in the flesh to read to them anew,† and to bring out its well nigh obliterated characters afresh.

He notes that in the Latin copies it was not "*All things*," but "*All good things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them*." But he rejects this "*good*" as clearly an interpolation, not being found in any Greek MSS.; and he thus explains the manner in which it probably found its way into the text. It had occurred to some one reading these words: But what if a man should desire sinful things of another, as to be invited of him to a drunken revel, and should proceed him-

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\* *Enarr. in Ps.* cxl. 6: Dixit hoc Pythagoras, dixit hoc Plato. . . . Propterea si inventus fuerit aliquis eorum hoc dixisse quod dixit et Christus, gratulamur illi, non sequimur illum. Sed prior fuit ille quam Christus? Si quis vera loquitur, prior est quam ipsa Veritas? O homo, attende Christum, non quando ad te venerit, sed quando te fecerit.

† *Enarr. in Ps.* lvii. 2: Quia homines appetentes ea quæ foris sunt, etiam a seipsis exules facti sunt, data est etiam conscripta lex: non quia in cordibus scripta non erat; sed quia tu fugitivus eras cordis tui, ab illo qui ubique est, comprehenderis, et ad teipsum intro revocaris.

self first to invite the other to the same, that he might be requited in like kind, this could not surely be fulfilling the Lord's precept. And so to avoid this evil consequence, which to the reader or transcriber seemed to be involved in the words, he guarded this "*All things*" by making it rather, "*All good things*."\* Augustine, however, shows that there is really no such difficulty here; for we do not *will* other than *good* things; we *desire* bad things.† It is true, that "to will" may be sometimes used in a laxer and in the lower sense; but this does not hinder, where need is, the taking of it in the stricter, in which here it is to be accepted.—"*This is the law and the prophets*," not,

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\* *De Civ. Dei*, l. 14. c. 8: Cavendum enim putaverunt, ne quisquam inhonesta velit sibi fieri ab hominibus, ut de turpioribus taceam, certe luxuriosa convivia in quibus se, si et ipse illis faciat similia, hoc præceptum existimet impleturum. Cf. *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 22.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 22: Id enim quod dictum est, Quæcunque vultis, non usitate ac passim, sed proprie dictum accipi oportet. Voluntas namque non est nisi in bonis. Nam in malis flagitiosisque factis, cupiditas proprie dicitur, non voluntas. Cf. *De Civ. Dei*, l. 14. c. 8. To the unregenerate belongs indeed the liberum *arbitrium*, that is, in each individual case a choice is possible to them: the libera *voluntas* pertains only to the regenerate; this is their redemption that they have the will set free in Christ. And there is an higher yet, as Augustine teaches, even than this libera voluntas, namely, the *libertas*, the beata necessitas boni, which may be ascribed only to God and to his holy Angels; as at the other extreme there is the misera *necessitas* peccandi, the condition of devils, and that into which evil men are every day more and more coming. Tertullian's method of guarding this passage from abuse (*Adv. Marc.* l. 4. c. 16,) appears at first sight different, yet essentially agrees with Augustine's.



“*All* the law and the prophets,” as Christ expressed himself elsewhere, (Matt. xxii. 40,) for there He had been giving the two commandments, Love to God, and love to our neighbour, so that He could thus speak; but this commandment in its utmost latitude includes only the love to our brother.

Ver. 13, 14.—On the words “*Enter ye in at the strait gate,*” he has in one of his homilies many excellent observations. What is it, he asks, which makes this gate so strait to us and this way so narrow? It is not so much that it is “*strait*” in its own nature, as that we make it strait for ourselves, by the swellings of our pride;—and then, vexed that we cannot enter, chafing and impatient at the hindrances we meet with, we become more and more unable to pass through. But where is the remedy? how shall these tumid places of our souls be brought down? By accepting and drinking of the cup, wholesome though it may be distasteful, of humility; by listening to and learning of Him, who having said, “*Enter ye in at the strait gate,*” to them who enquire, “How shall we enter in?” says also, “By Me;” “I am the Way;” “I am the gate.”\*

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\* *Serm.* 142. c. 5: Clamat ille qui factus est Via; Intrate per angustam portam. Conatur ingredi, impedit tumor: et tanto magis perniciose conatur, quanto magis impedit tumor. Tumidum autem vexat angustia, vexatus autem amplius tumebit. Amplius tumens quando intrabit? Ergo detumescat. . . . Accipiat humilitatis medicamentum, bibat contra tumorem poculum amarum sed salubre, bibat poculum humilitatis. Quid se arctat? Non sinit moles, non

We may here adduce an example of the rich symbolic significance which of old men loved to trace in many of the ways and works of the lower creation: most, it is true, of these having been found by us and with our more accurate knowledge to be mythical, yet which may still in their higher application survive for us. Thus Augustine, with reference to this passage, alludes to the artifice by which the serpent is believed to get rid of its old skin, namely, by forcing itself through some narrow aperture and so leaving behind that old, and coming out in all the freshness and splendour of its new. And wouldst thou, he asks, according to the bidding of the apostle, put off the old man and put on the new, there is but one way to effect it. Thou must not be afraid of the straitness of this gate; it is only by forcing thyself through it, that thou canst leave behind thee the *exuviae* of the old man.\*

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magna, sed tumida. Magnitudo enim soliditatem habet, tumor inflationem.

\* *Enarr. in Ps. Lvii. 5*: Et quomodo exuo, inquis, veterem hominem? Imitare astutiam serpentis. Quid enim facit serpens, ut exuat se veterem tunicam? Coarctat se per foramen angustum. Et ubi, inquis, invenio hoc foramen angustum? Audi. Arcta et angusta est via quæ ducit ad vitam. . . . Ibi ponenda est vetus tunica, et alibi poni non potest. Aut si vis vetustate impediri, gravari, premi, noli ire per angustam. Cf. *Serm. 64. c. 2*; *De Doct. Christ. l. 2. c. 16*; *Quæst. 17. in Matt. qu. 8*. Augustine is very fond of these adaptations from the natural history, or oftener from the natural mythology, of animals; makes frequent allusion to curious legends about them, which are valuable to him in that he finds in them the reflexes of spiritual truths; as here of the mystery of the regeneration. Thus he alludes to the story of the pelican killing its young, and then wounding its own bosom, and revivifying them on

And if processes like these be painful, yet still remember the present time is the time of cure, not of enjoyment.\*—And on the “*many*” and the “*few*,” Be not led away, he says,

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the third day with the blood from thence : even so is there one who says “I kill and I make alive.” (*Enarr. in Ps. ci. § 8.*) A part of the wisdom of the serpent which the faithful shall imitate is this, that when threatened it offers its *body* to the assailant, but at all hazards protects its *head*. Christ is every man’s head : let the persecutor wound thee anywhere, in thy goods, in thy person, but not in thy faith ; not in Him. (*Enarr. in Ps. lvii. § 10 ; Sermon. 64. c. 2.*) “Bear ye one another’s burdens” he illustrates by this legend of a custom among stags (*Enarr. in Ps. cxxix. § 4*) : Dicuntur cervi quando transeunt in proximas insulas pascuæ gratiâ, capita super se invicem ponere ; et unus qui ante est solus portat caput, et non ponit super alterum : sed cum et ipse defecerit, tollit se ab anteriore parte, et redit posterius ut et ipse in altero requiescat : et sic portant omnes onera sua, et perveniunt ad quod desiderant ; et non patiuntur naufragium, quia quasi navis est illis caritas. Cf. *Enarr. in Ps. xli. § 4*. I have somewhere read of the same device ascribed to cranes in their long flights. For other properties of the stag see *Enarr. in Ps. xli. § 3*. The fact that the hen droops and sickens, loses all the freshness and brightness of her plumage while she is nursing her young, reminds him often of Him who in the days of his flesh wept over Jerusalem, whose children He would fain have gathered together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and they would not. (Matt. xxiii. 37.) Thus *Enarr. 1<sup>a</sup> in Ps. lviii. § 10* : Infirmatus est usque ad mortem, et assumsit infirmitatis carnem, ut pullos Jerusalem colligeret sub alas suas, tanquam gallina infirmata cum parvulis. Certe notam rem dico, quæ in conspectu nostro quotidie versatur : quomodo raucescit vox, quomodo fit hispidum totum corpus ? deponuntur alæ, laxantur plumæ, et vides circa pullos nescio quid ægrotum, et ea est materna caritas quæ invenitur infirmitas. Cf. *Enarr. 1<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xc. § 5 ; Sermon. 105. § 8*. But that this note has grown already too long, I might quote a singular legend of the manner in which he supposes the eagle to renew its youth. (Ps. ciii. 5.) *Enarr. in Ps. cii. § 9*.

\* *Sermon. 87. c. 11* : Sanitatis tempus est, non voluptatis.

by the numbers of those, nor abashed by the fewness of these; for when thou comparest, do not *number*, but *weigh* them; and in a just balance note how few grains are enough to overbalance whole armsful of chaff.\*

Ver. 15—20.—Our Lord has said just before that there are few that find this way of life; and now there is danger lest heretics, who commonly glory in their fewness,† as though it marked them especially as the “*little flock*” to whom the kingdom was given, should snatch at these words, and boast that they were the finders of, and leaders in, the way. Therefore follows immediately the caution, “*Beware of false prophets.*” This is the connexion which Augustine gives: but concerning the “*good fruit*,” the not having of which, and the having the contrary to which, will cause these false prophets to be known, and will lay bare their hypocrisy; these, he remarks, it is clear cannot be those more prominent works of an outward piety, prayer, fasting, alms, which have been mentioned before. For such are the “*clothing*” which at first meets the eye, the true and natural in the case of the sheep; the adventitious and false in that of the wolves. But the “*fruits*” which they ought to have, and have not, but rather their evil contraries, he explains by a

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cccix. 4*: Noli numerare, sed appende: stateram affer æquam. . . . Vide contra pauca grana quantam paleam leves.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. l. 2. c. 23*: Hæretici, qui se plerumque paucitate commendant.

reference to Gal. v. 19, and to the “fruit of the Spirit” enumerated there:\* not that there may not be in bad men imitations also of these, but the simple eye will most often detect them; and this is the explanation of all which, before these cautions are given, has been said concerning the keeping of the eye single, since the single eye will alone be able to profit by them.† This is not the usual explanation of the early Church, but the “*fruits*” which shall declare the true character of these deceitful workers, are generally taken as the false doctrines by the bringing forward of which, false teachers, who may wear an appearance of outward sanctity, shall sooner or later be detected. Yet any satisfying explanation must combine both false doctrines and sinful works; and they cannot be thus distinguished; for a false doctrine is as much a work as a wicked deed, and as really the outgrowth of the inner man.

But the impossibility of the actual outcoming from evil being anything but evil, the certainty therefore that sooner or later it will display itself in its true nature, this the Lord illustrates and sets forth by the example of trees, which must bear after their kind. Yet here Augustine notes how the error of the Manichæans is carefully to be guarded against. They, while they arbitrarily rejected so much of Christ’s teaching, made much of the

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\* So *Enarr. in Ps. cxlix. 1*: Non enim fructus ostenditur nisi in factis. . . . Quærimus fructus caritatis, invenimus spinas dissensionis. Ex fructibus eorum cognoscetis eos.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon. l. 2. c. 24.*

Sermon on the Mount, calling it the "divine discourse,"\* mainly on account of these verses 17 and 18, in which they professed to find a support for their system of two original principles†—one good, from which good proceeded, and one evil, from which evil; and of two races of men, having their descent from the one and from the other. But he shows plainly that what went before and what comes after, (see Luke vi. 43—45,) alike require another interpretation; that only when forcibly rent away from the context, can the words even semblably give support to such a doctrine. There is no assertion here of a Manichæan dualism; neither does Christ say of men, that there is aught irrevocably fixed in their natures, so that some can never become good, and others never evil; but only that *so long as a man is as an evil tree*, he cannot bring forth good fruits, that if he would *do* good he must first *be* good.‡ To support the other view, as he acutely observes,

\* See the words of Faustus in Augustine's work, *Con. Faust.* l. 32. c. 7: Credimus . . . cunctum Sermonem deificum, qui maxime duarum præferens naturarum discretionem, ipsius esse non venit in dubium.

† *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 24: Illorum error maxime cavendum est, qui de ipsis duabus arboribus duas naturas opinantur esse, quarum una sit Dei, altera vero neque Dei, neque ex Deo.

‡ *Con. Adimant.* c. 26: Mala ergo arbor fructus bonos facere non potest; sed ex malâ fieri bona potest, ut bonos fructus ferat. And again, Muta cor et mutabitur opus. Cf. *De Act. c. Fel. Manich.* l. 2. c. 2, 4; *Con. Fortunat. Disput.* 2. He is scarcely correct, however, when he explains "*Make the tree good*" (Matt. xii. 33), as an admonition; for so a perplexity will arise with regard to the words that follow, "*Make the tree corrupt*;" since no such admo-



it ought to have been said, A good tree cannot become a bad one, nor a bad one good. There is indeed, he affirms, a difference in men, as they are natural or regenerate, as they belong to the stock of the wild olive, (the *oleaster*,) or have been engrafted anew on the good olive tree, as they pertain to Adam or to Christ. But then the wild olive is not of a different nature from the good, but is only a degeneration of that good.\* This degeneration took place at the fall: then, that which was a good tree became the wild and bitter stock, and as such it filled the world with its shoots,—incapable of restoring itself to its first and nobler condition, yet capable of being restored, if only it were grafted anew upon one of that stock from which it originally fell away, and through this re-engrafting became partaker of its better life. The first Adam, the head of the fallen race, is this wild olive, having become such at his fall; the second Adam, the head of the restored race, is the good olive, in whom are laid up the possibilities of renewal for all.

But Augustine, as he had, on the one side, to deny,

dition could have come from the lips of Christ. But “*Make*” here rather answers to our English, Suppose: Grant or suppose a corrupt tree, give me such by way of argument, and I say the fruit will be corrupt also. He often himself uses *Fac*, and *Pone*, in this same sense.

\* Augustine is very earnest and very strong on this, of evil having no independent subsistence, but being only a degeneration of good; so that in one place where he deals with this matter at large, he can say (*Enchir. de Fide, Spe, et Car.* c. 12. 13): *Quid est malus homo, nisi malum bonum?*

against the Manichæans, an evil creation coming from the hands of a God of perfect goodness,—to deny that there were any men the very original foundations of whose being were evil, trees which could not become good, and which therefore could not bring forth good fruit,—so also had he, on the other side, to deny, against the Pelagians, that the degenerate tree was capable of restoring *itself*, and bringing forth good fruit, by its own unaided power :\* and as he had to rescue this verse from Manichæan abuses, so it furnished him with weapons against the shallow Pelagian scheme which would regard men's deeds apart from the living root in the man out of which they grew. When he, awfully conscious of God as the one and only fountain of all goodness, laid down the great principle, No act is good, if it be not of faith ;† that is, if the man who did it stood not in a living connexion with the one source of goodness, they sought to embarrass him with

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\* The statement of Pelagius (*De Grat. Christi*, l. 1. c. 18) is so exactly that of a Pelagian world now and at all times, that it is worth quoting: *Habemus autem possibilitatem utriusque partis a Deo insitam, velut quamdam, ut ita dicam, radicem fructiferam atque fœcundam, quæ ex voluntate hominis diversâ gignat et pariat, et quæ possit ad proprii cultoris arbitrium vel nitere flore virtutum, vel sentibus horrere vitiorum.* It is at once evident that this theory of human nature is at the bottom of all our modern schemes of education, which proceed on the plan of cultivating the old stock, rather than the being engrafted on a new.

† *Enarr. 2<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xxxi.*: *Laudo fructum boni operis, sed in fide agnosco radicem.* There is here in the introduction to this psalm a large discussion, in the most popular form, on the relation of faith and works, the tree and its fruits, and one full of interest.

the splendid deeds of heathens and unbaptized men,—with the chastity of Scipio, the fortitude of Regulus, the incorruptibility of Fabricius : they demanded, whether he would deny these to be good ? To this he made answer, that they had no right as moralists to take isolated acts, and ask a judgment upon them. For the true question was this, Was the man who wrought these acts a righteous man ? was the tree good ? for if not, He who is himself the Truth had declared that the fruit could not be good. We may feel that the truest application of his principle to Pelagian objectors would have been one, which should not thus have made these lofty deeds to have been wholly false, only more splendid sins, as he keenly calls them ; but rather to have replied, that these also were of faith ; that wherever there was a deed wrought any where or by any man lofty or pure or true, that also was of *his* inspiration from whom all good things do come, and who left not Himself any where without a witness. Yet, however we may thus feel that the “faith without which it is impossible to please God,” might have been made by him of larger reach, and to embrace some whom he excludes, his principle stands fast. He was here asserting the foundation of all morals, namely, that the condition of the man determines the value of the deed, that the motive *is* the deed,\*—and of all religion, namely, that it is only the man

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\* One of the chiefest obligations of Christian Ethics to Augustine and to his influence, is that he nowhere deals with, but everywhere attacks at the root, what one might not unfitly call *quantitative* morality,—I mean a morality which acknowledges such questions as

in relation with God who can do righteous acts ; or in forms of speech which this Scripture supplies, and which he often uses, The good tree only can bring forth good fruit, and that tree only is good, which has been engrafted on a nobler stock, and made partaker of a better life than its own.\*

Ver. 21, 22.—How, Augustine inquires, are these words of the Lord to be reconciled with those other of his apostle, “No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost ;” (1 Cor. xii. 3 ;) for here are some that “call Jesus Lord,” whom yet He denies ever to have been his, who therefore could never have said this in the power of the Holy Ghost?† But he easily sets the two passages at one, showing how the “*saying* that Jesus is the Lord,” is there to be accepted in its highest sense ; it is the *saying* which is the genuine out-coming and expression of the innermost conviction, that which all speech would have been, if sin had not made every man more or less a liar, and therefore his speech not always to be the faithful utterance of that which is within him, he now

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this, which I take from a Romish book of casuistry lately published in Italy : “*How many* scudi must a man steal to constitute a mortal sin?” What morality can exist in a land, where the light has become such darkness as this?

\* The largest use of this passage, in its bearing on the Pelagian controversy, is to be found in his treatise *Con. Julian*. l. 4. c. 3.

† The apparent opposition comes out in the double *dicat* of the Latin, (here, Non omnis qui *dicat* mihi Domine, and there, Nemo potest *dicere* Dominus Jesus,) more than either in the Greek or English, which both have different words in the two places.

oftentimes speaking more or less differently from that which he actually thinks or feels. But such is not properly *speech* at all.\* And in this highest sense of saying, in which the saying is the expression of the being, no man *says* "that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost;" no man, in other words, believes it in his heart but by the Holy Ghost. This is what St. Paul affirms;† while our Lord, using the words as men are commonly wont to use them, who do not deny even to falsehoods the title of speech, affirms there will be some who will have *said*, "*Lord, Lord*," but out of no true heart. Elsewhere Augustine uses the same important distinction for the purpose of delivering our Saviour's declaration, "Who-soever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him," (Matt. xii. 32,) from shallow, and yet mischievous, interpretations,‡ as though any mere words

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\* *De Serm. Dom. in Mon.* l. 2. c. 25: *Videtur enim dicere etiam ille qui nec vult nec intelligit quod dicit: sed ille proprie dicit, qui voluntatem ac mentem suam sono vocis enuntiat.*

† Exactly in the same way, when he declares, "Whosoever shall *call* upon the name of the Lord shall be saved," (Rom. x. 13,) the word "*call*" is to be taken in the same pregnant sense.

‡ *Exp. Ep. ad Rom.*: Verbum enim dicere non ita videtur hîc positum, ut tantummodo illud intelligatur quod per linguam fabricamus, sed quod corde conceptum etiam opere exprimimus. Thus on the parallel, Rom. x. 10, "With the mouth confession is made unto salvation," he observes (*In Ev. Joh. Tract.* 26): De radice cordis surgit ista confessio. Aliquando audis confitentem, et nescis credentem. Sed nec debes vocare confitentem, quem judicas non credentem . . . Si aliud in corde habes, aliud dicis; loqueris, non confiteris. Here, it will be noted, he makes "*confess*" to be the pregnant word.

whatsoever could be meant,—even such as a man in the wildest and guiltiest moments of his blasphemy might have spoken; as though any thing could be here intended short of the entire and final alienation of the heart and will and life from every thing divine, the contradiction of the whole man to all of God's which testifies of grace and mercy and truth and holiness; a sin which therefore, in its very nature, has excluded its own forgiveness.\*

Will these who say, "*Have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name have cast out devils?*" in this be speaking truly, or will this word be another untruth added to all that have gone before in their lives? Some, Augustine replies, might be tempted to understand it in the latter sense, as that in this also they are liars, from finding a difficulty in attributing the actual performance of miracles or wonderful works to ungodly men, to any who should at last hear that terrible "*Depart from me,*" from the lips of the Saviour. But to dissolve this objection, he refers to the case of the Egyptian magicians, to those of Saul† and of Balaam, and to the Lord's own words concerning the false prophets of the latter days.‡

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\* *Exp. Ep. ad Rom.*: Qui hoc verbum, quod sine veniâ vult intelligi Dominus, in Spiritum Sanctum dicit, hoc est, qui desperans de gratiâ et pace quam donat, in peccatis suis perseverandum sibi esse dicit, *dicere* intelligendus in factis.

† *Enarr. in Ps. ciii.* 3.

‡ *Ad Simplicianum*, l. 2. qu. 1: Non enim eos mentientes putamus ista dicturos in illo iudicio, ubi nullus erit fallendi locus, aut ullam vocem talium legimus, dicentium, Dileximus te. Cf. *Serm.* 138. c. 3.



(Matt. xxiv. 24.) All these were really partakers of a spiritual power, though they used it for their own harm. And, suggested by this and like passages, he has in many places instructive words and warnings on the nothingness of all gifts, even up to the greatest gift of working all miracles, if there be not charity. These all are no proofs of holiness, without which holiness we cannot enter into life; (Heb. xii. 14;) while without them we may well have a place in the kingdom. Not the gifts which they had in common but with a few, not that the devils were subject to them, was the true matter of exultation for the disciples; but rather, as their Lord reminded them, that which they had in common with all believers, namely, that their names were written in heaven.\* (Luke x. 17—20.) And he has many warnings drawn from the declaration here,† against wishing to be signalized in the Church for gifts, which always bring with them the danger of puffing up the possessor, rather than for graces, which will keep him humble. Better, in this mystical body, to be a little finger which is sound, than an eye which is bleared and winking;‡ though one be a member

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxxx. 1*: Non omnes Christiani boni dæmones ejiciunt, omnium tamen nomina scripta sunt in cælo. Non eos voluit gaudere ex eo quod proprium habebant, sed ex eo quod cum cæteris salutem tenebant. Cf. *Serm. 143. c. 7*.

† *Enarr. in Ps. ciii. 3*: Videant qualem rationem habituri sunt cum Deo qui sanctis non sancte utuntur.

‡ *Enarr. in Ps. cxxx. 1*: Tutior est enim in corpore digitus sanus, quam lippieus oculus . . . . Non ergo quærat quisque in corpore Christi nisi sanitatem.

of such little esteem, the other the noblest in the body.

Ver. 23.—The Lord's answer, "*I never knew you*," is here to be accepted according to that deeper meaning of *knowing*, which, as Augustine truly brings out, includes also loving,—a knowing which, in its essence, is reciprocal : he only is known who also knows ; so that he has all right when he affirms, "*I never knew you*," is but another way of saying, Ye never knew me. Not to be known of the Judge is never to have known Him, and is therefore itself the condemnation.\* And hereupon follows that terrible "*Depart from me*," that everlasting separation from the presence of God,† wherein every thing that is fearful is contained. And he often brings out that the terribleness of that "*Depart from me*" presents itself unto men under

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\* *Enarr. in Ps. cxli. 4* : Non novi vos. Non inde gaudeant et dicant, Non puniemur, quia non novit nos Judex. Jam puniti sunt, si eos non novit Judex.

† *Enarr. in Ps. xlix. 3* : Si enim possemus facere, fratres, ut dies judicii non veniret, puto quia nec sic erat male vivendum. Si non veniret ignis die judicii, et sola peccatoribus immineret separatio a facie Dei, in quâlibet essent affluentia deliciarum, non videntes a quo creati sunt, et separati ab illâ dulcedine ineffabilis vultûs ejus, in quâlibet æternitate et impunitate peccati, plangere se deberent. Sed quid loquar, aut quibus loquar? Hæc amantibus pœna est, non contemnentibus. Qui dulcedinem sapientiæ et veritatis utcumque sentire cœperunt, noverunt quod dico, quanta pœna sit tantummodo a facie Dei separari : qui autem illam dulcedinem non gustaverunt, si nondum desiderant Dei faciem, timeant vel ignem ; supplicia terreant, quem præmia non invitant. Cf. *Enarr. 2<sup>a</sup> in Ps. xxvi. 9*.

very different aspects, as they are or are not the true servants and children of God. For the faithful man, for him who has been saying, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, . . . to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple," it is dreadful for this, even that it is exclusion from the face of the beloved; therefore he is not of the "*workers of iniquity*," lest he should thus lose the light of God's countenance.\* But for the ungodly these words are dreadful, not for this exclusion, but only for the after pains and penalties which they involve: and if hindered from sinning, it is not the fear of displeasing that Lord, and of being bidden to depart from Him, that hinders them; on the contrary, if they could ensure to themselves an eternal impunity of sinning, they would choose to sin on for ever. Not the fear of this loss of his favour, of this separation from his presence, but the dread of what in his anger he could do to them, restrains them.†

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\* *Gratis amans, non puniri timens ab eo quem tremit, sed separari ab eo quem diligit.*

† He has an instructive passage, *In 1 Ep. Joh. Tract. 9*, on the subject, where he likens souls in these two conditions to two wives; the one purely loving her absent husband, the other adulteress in will, though not daring to be also in deed; each *fearing* her husband. *Et quomodo discernuntur duo ista timores? Timet illa, timet et illa; . . . Jam ergo interrogentur, Quare? Illa dicit, Timeo virum, ne veniat: illa dicit, Timeo virum, ne discedat. Illa dicit, Timeo ne damner: illa dicit, Timeo, ne deserar.* Yet the servile fear has its subordinate value; it may be keeping a place and making room for the holy fear, though the latter cannot enter till the first go out; to use his own illustration, *Sicut videmus per setam introduci linum, quando aliquid suitur, seta prius intrat, sed nisi exeat, non succedit linum.*

And he often presses each man to judge of himself and of his state, whether he be a lover of God or only a fearer of hell, by asking himself what is the truly terrible which this “*Depart from me*” seems to contain for him.\*

Ver. 24—29.—There is a solemn awfulness in this conclusion, which Augustine bids us specially to note; urging that neither by the one or other of these parties, not by those who are swept away any more than by those who stand, can the open despisers of the truth be signified.† For in each case there is a willingness to hear the word, a certain good will therefore towards the truth. But only in one way does that which is heard win a stable foundation in the soul, that is, through being turned into action: “*Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, who built his house upon a rock.*” Christ, as in so many other places of Scripture, is Himself the “*rock*,” that man builds on the rock, who does the things which he hears and learns of Christ. Augustine distinguishes, but not in a way calling for especial note, three forms of trial and temptation, as set forth under “*the winds*,” “*the rain*,” and “*the floods*,” and in one place asks: If it be thus to have built insecurely, what will it be not to have built at all? Some indeed might say, Better not to build at all, if such is the

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\* *Serm.* 178. c. 10.

† *Ep.* 127. c. 7: Dominus enim Jesus non ab iis qui non audiunt, sed eos inter se auditores verborum suorum, latissimo limite non tenui distinctione discrevit.

doom of building insecurely. But will it be a better doom to be swept away naked, than to be swept away among the ruins of thy fallen house? \* That were not to hear at all, to have built nothing; this is to hear and not do, to have built weakly. It remains as the only prudent thing, —to hear, and what we hear to do; being doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving our own selves. (Jam. i. 22.)

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\* *Serm.* 179. c. 9: Venit pluvia, veniunt flumina. Nunquid ideo tutus, quia raperis nudus? *Enarr. in Ps.* cii. 21: Audire et non facere, in arenâ ædificare est; audire et facere, in petrâ ædificare est; nec audire, nec facere nihil ædificare est. Si in arenâ ædificas, ruinam ædificas: si nihil ædificas, expositus pluviis, fluminibus, ventis, ante rapieris quam steteris. Ergo non est cessandum, sed ædificandum; nec sic ædificandum, ut ruina ædificetur; sed in petrâ ædificandum, ut tentatio non evertat.—On the concluding words of St. Matthew, with which he sums up the impression which this discourse made on the assembled multitude: "*He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes,*" see what Augustine says, *Enarr. n Ps.* xciii. § 8.

THE END.

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